Thursday, November 24, 2011 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 26 / No. 349 P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Text INQ ON BREAKING to 4467
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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

WAITING GAME Life is hard in Hacienda Luisita but Willie Ligado (right), a migrant from Negros province, says the drudgery has been eased by reports that the Supreme Court has decided to distribute the vast sugar estate to farm workers like him. (See story below.)

Mike A liable in chopper scam

He may be put back on watch list–De Lima

By Leila B. Salaverria

HEY, NOT so fast, Mike.

As Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was fighting her hospital arrest, her husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo yesterday found himself enmeshed in an explosive graft charge just as he had gotten off being implicated in the electoral sabotage case his wife had been charged with and was told that he could leave the country as he wished.

A fact-finding panel of the Office of the Ombudsman found the husband of the former President and now Pampanga representative liable for graft charges for the allegedly anomalous sale of helicopters to the Philippine National Police in 2008.

Also found liable for violation of the antigraft law were former Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno; former PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa; Manila Aerospace Products Trading Corp. president Hilario De Vera; and National Police Commission members Avelino Razon, PHILA, A11

Hopes high in Luisita for good news

By Tonette Orejas, *Inquirer Central Luzon* and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. in Manila

CONCEPCION, Tarlac—As he dashed sugarcane during this harvest season at Hacienda Luisita, Willie Ligado said he was filled with hope upon hearing the news that the Supreme Court was preparing to issue soon its ruling on the agrarian dispute in the estate owned by relatives of President Aquino.

HOPES, A17

57 LOST DREAMS ON GROUND ZERO Families of slain journalists offer flowers at the site where 57 people, 32 of them media workers, were mercilessly mowed down by members of a powerful Muslim clan on Nov. 23, 2009, in the town of Ampatuan, Maguindanao province.

Lola teaches FB users, TV viewers 'true love'

By DJ Yap

ABOUT 68,000 strangers helped Lola Aurelia find her missing husband.

In return, the 75-year-old woman taught them a lesson about love.

Aurelia Matias' poignant quest to find

LOLA, A19

MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE

Victims' kin remember, weep

By Rosa May de Guzman-Maitem, *Inquirer Mindanao*

AMPATUAN, Maguindanao—Traveling long distances, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and children yesterday came to the memorial service at the massacre site in Sitio Masalay, and quietly wept.

They laid flowers, lit candles, and released doves and white balloons bearing the words "Justice Now."

Fifty-seven people, including 32 media workers, were killed in the massacre. The body of a supposed 58th victim—journalist Reynaldo Momay—remains missing.

The victims were on their way to Shariff Aguak town in Maguindanao to file the certificate of candidacy for governor of then Buluan town Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu. His last his wife and sisters in the carnage, perpetrated allegedly by armed men

VICTIMS, A10

DOJ asks high court to call GMA doctors

By Marlon Ramos and Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice (DOJ) yesterday petitioned the Supreme Court to summon the attending physicians of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the continuation today of the oral arguments on her petition questioning the ban on her travel abroad.

In an urgent motion filed by the Office of the Solicitor General, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima argued that it was important for Arroyo's doctors to inform the justices of her actual physical condition in order to help them decide on her pending motion challenging DOJ Circular No. 41. The circular, issued during Arroyo's presidency, authorizes the justice secretary to issue watch-list and hold-departure orders as per-

DOJ, A11

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR Inquirer president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot receive the Newspaper of the Year Award during the 1st PMAP Makatao Awards held at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City on Wednesday. At left is People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) president Solomon Caesar C. Aurero and Jimmy M. Isidro (right), former PMAP president.

CHARLIE

Serge grills PH envoy to China, warns of disaster

By Cathy Yamsuan

EXASPERATION reigned at the confirmation hearing of the country's ambassador to China yesterday after it became apparent that his only qualification is his closeness to President Aquino's family.

Dominique Lee, who claims to be the godson of the President's grandfather, Benigno Aquino Sr., could not even enumerate the three "pillars" of Philippine diplomacy before the Commission on Appointments

SERGE, A13

NEWS
Sharon on TVS: I'll work my famous behind off / A2

METRO
Edsa to be renamed Cory Avenue? / A21

BUSINESS
PH firms top world social media usage / B1

WORLD
Gadhafi son betrayed by desert guide / A24

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Mostly cloudy with rain showers

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Rain
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Rain
Aparri	Mostly Cloudy	Thunderstorm
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	Rain
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Catarman	Mostly Cloudy	Rain

STL 3D
1st 17 3
2nd 16 30
3rd 4 2

SUERTRESS
1st 7 8 9
2nd 2 1 6
3rd 5 8 2

FOUR DIGIT (Tuesday)
2 6 3 4

MEGA 6/49
5 23 25 35 39 45
P4,500,000.00

6/55 GRAND LOTTO
13 30 37 48 49 54
P116,939,352.80

LOTTO: TAYO Text 894 LOTTO, send to 4443. PLS Makers

Smooth sailing seen for budget

By Christine Avendaño, Gil Cabacungan and Christian Esguerra

WITH Congress set to deliver passage of the P1.816-trillion national budget for 2012, Malacañang yesterday assured lawmakers it would begin spending the funds early.

"Compared to this year when we started spending only in June, we will start spending in January. No one can accuse the Finance and the Senate that the disbursements will be released in early or January," said presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda.

Lacierda defended the delay in government spending this year, explaining that the executive branch was scanning the entire of infrastructure departments.

Public Works and Highways Secretary Rogelio Singson, for instance, has been pouring his efforts into reviewing the department's system in his department, he said.

Bicam committee

The Senate approved early this week on third and final reading the proposed 2012 budget, paving the way for the bicameral committee to begin reconciling the House and Senate versions.

Congress hopes to submit the new budget law to President Aquino by early December.

Both majority and minority blocs in the House agree that the budget will be approved as scheduled as the bicameral conference committee met last week.

"Everything appears on track as scheduled. We expect President Aquino to sign it on Dec. 15," said Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II.

Cavite Rep. Joseph Emilio Aguinaldo, chair of the House appropriations committee, said economic afford government corresponding this year would not be a factor in the House, adding that everyone expects the measure to be ratified as early as Tuesday.

Lone dissenter

Sen. Jinkee Pimpo, the lone dissenting vote in the Senate, said the government's underspending in 2010 (but left more than P200 billion in unspent funds that Malacañang could use like a blank check next year.

Minority Leader Nikki Lagman said that while he shared Arroyo's concerns, the minority reckoned that the alternative of implementing the 2012 budget and rolling over the 2011 budget to 2012 was an even more unpalatable prospect.

Lagman appealed to the administration that while it can do anything it wants in Congress with its superior numbers, it should give Congress a chance to tweak some parts of its budget proposal.

The Senate has agreed to allow the Aquino administration to keep its allocation of more than P7 billion for reproductive health programs in next year's budget, despite the absence of a national framework contained in the proposed RH bill.

Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, a leading opponent of the RH measure, did not block the enormous allocation included in the proposed budget for the Department of Health.

Sotto even offered to increase the RH budget, which, as per near levels, would benefit nearly around 50 percent of the poorest households in the country.

Who needs RH bill?

The senator said he decided to support the allocation for the DOH's reproductive health programs because "it proves that you don't need the RH bill."

"What do we need the bill for? With the passage of the budget and with the DOH is a complete reproductive health program for women and infants, we don't need the RH bill," he said.

In its version, the Senate opted to remove P446 million in the DOH budget. Sotto said the amount was a "duplication" of the existing P1.7-billion allocation for a vaccination program for elders aged between 60 and 65.

"Our suggestion was to cut it and distribute it to specialty hospitals of government," he said.

Sharon on TV5: I'll work my famous behind off

By Raquel San Diego and Allan Policarpio, Contributor

SHARON CUNETA, TV5's newest contract star, vows to "work my famous behind off."

It is a statement said to be woven yesterday Cuneta said, "The film is my lucky to luck. I have no interest in it".

After 23 years with ABS-CBN, the singer-actress, dubbed "Megastar," inked a five-year contract with TV5 on Tuesday evening.

In her own home station, Cuneta is slated to host a daily talk show and a reality show. She will also star in a movie with ex-husband Gabby Concepcion, to be produced by Studio 5 and Viva Films.

Present at the signing, held at the network's corporate headquarters at the Mercato Tower in Taguig, were TV5 president and CEO Ray Espinosa, executive vice president and COO Robert Barreiro, and Viva Entertainment's Vic del Rosario, who now manages Cuneta's career.

No one mentioned how much deal Cuneta struck. Provided about a rumored P5-billion tag price, Cuneta and the execs smiled and laughed, but remained tight-lipped about the exact figure.

Cuneta did say, however: "No matter what it is worth or what you have, it's my loyalty that is priceless."

Del Rosario told reporters on Friday, "It will be tremendous as we are about to (the industry)." He added, "After [we] this movie] is not about money; it's about being able to do the kind of shows that she wants."

Observers speculated that the rumored P150 package would include projected income for Cuneta in acquisition of several factory endorsements. Del Rosario confirmed her "talent exit" in dinner with TV5, through her new Mega Productions.

In her statement, next we [ABS-CBN] Cuneta said she would "always love my family at ABS-CBN," that the rest of the merger was "unavoidable." "I am happy to be with the happy network, TV5. I look forward to making new friends and the best TV shows. I cannot wait to once again make the most of the gifts that God has blessed me with, and I will make sure I use them to the fullest."

Tuesday night before the contract signing, the atmosphere simmered with excitement as employees gathered to welcome their new flagship trade member for TV5 talents, workers and local viewers.)

ABS-CBN talents are called Kapamilya, (2008 TV, Kapuso).

After several photo-ops, the 45-year-old singer-actress proceeded to the boardroom, where she turned emotional, even shedding a few tears before signing the contract.

She said in a TV5 interview earlier, "I'm happy... a little nervous, a little scared, because it's all new people and it's a new beginning. It's another progress," she stated. "Time is a valuable, you have to make a change in your life. I think at this point, this is the best move for me."

She said the enthusiasm she felt was comparable to when she first joined the ABS-CBN network. Speaking of which, Cuneta is not with ABS-CBN forever, but by their end CEO Eugenio "Gabby" Lopez III and president Charo Santos-Concio on Monday night to say goodbye.

A highly placed source said Cuneta was a little weepy at Monday's meeting. The latter said it blessed, "It was painful."

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P-Noy's 8-year program vs climate change hailed

By TJ Burgonio

AS THE country observes the National Climate Change Consciousness Week, a network of civil society groups has hailed President Aquino for signing the National Climate Change Action Plan which outlines the measures the government will undertake to address climate change.

The action plan, a comprehensive national program of the government covering a period of 18 years, is the country's roadmap for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

"Though Friday was a no-show during the formal celebrations, he more than made up for it by finally signing the NCCAP (National Climate Change Action Plan). This signals the government's firm commitment to help us all cope with climate change impacts," Vanessa Bedman, Akbayan Citizens' Action Party, said in a statement.

Greenest president

Akbayan Citizens is a network of 40 civil society organizations working on environment, climate change and development related issues.

Officials said that President Aquino's signing of the government's action plan against climate change would make him "one of the greenest presidents" in the country.

"The President, as chair of the Climate Change Commission (CCC), approved the action plan on Tuesday.

"We did an 18-year plan to cover the six-year terms of Presidents and we said that President Aquino will not be anymore just a fellow president but one of the greenest presidents of the country," CCC vice chair Mary Ann Lucille Sering said reporters.

Sering said the action plan would outline the agenda for climate change adaptation and mitigation for 2011 to 2028.

Under the plan, the government would undertake seven strategic priorities—food security, water sufficiency, ecosystem and rural environment stability, human security, climate-smart industries and investments, sensible energy and knowledge and capacity development.

"The President is happy that we will not start from nothing," Sering added.

She said the implementation of the action plan would help the country get out of its current ranking of being the 6th of 170 countries being "in extreme risk of the impacts of climate change."

The action plan provides details on what solutions the government will do to addressing climate change, Sering said.

Sering said the action plan would also enable the country to gain access to the $30 billion Green Climate Fund under the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Researches conducted by the Manila Observatory, a Jesuit scientific institution engaged in the study of space weather, geomagnetism, climate and climate change mitigation and adaptation, among others, forecast increasing temperature in the country in the coming years that would impact on its food security.

Rising sea level

It also noted that the most visible effect of climate change was the rise in sea level, and that its impact would also be seen in the increasing of storms.

The Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) also welcomed the signing of the government action plan on climate change, but pressed for climate justice from the world's major polluters ahead of the 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) and the 7th Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in Durban, South Africa.

Citing a study of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), PMCJ said the United States is the biggest historical emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG), while the Philippines does not account for even 1 percent of global GHG emissions.

The Philippines, however, is No. 6 in the Climate Change Vulnerability Index, and third most vulnerable to disaster risks and natural hazards in the World Risk Index 2011, next to Vanuatu and Tonga.

"The Philippines does not contribute much to the GHG emissions worldwide, but we are the ones experiencing its worst impacts," said PMCJ lead convener Aldo Tuerbelang.

"Time is of the essence. These rich industrialized countries must accept their historical responsibility on the climate crisis and undertake drastic emissions cuts without offsets," he said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

Immigration bureau tightens visa rules on foreign students

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU of Immigration (BI) has tightened its rules on the screening of applications for foreign student visas and pursue following reports of "fake" foreign students in the country.

In a statement, Immigration Commissioner Ricardo David Jr. yesterday said he has issued new guidelines on the issuance of student visas and special study permits (SSP) to foreigners enrolled in various schools of the country.

Under a new memorandum, the school's designated liaison officer or representative, who must be an employee of the school, should represent or assist the foreign student in applying for a visa.

The commissioner said the new rule was imposed after reports reached him that unscrupulous travel agents have been conniving with foreigners to submit false or fraudulent documents of school records for student visa applications.

"We have to make sure that only foreigners actually studying in the Philippines are given these visas. This anomaly should be stopped because these fake foreign students are blatantly violating our laws," the BI chief said.

David said he has already instructed Linseen Ma. Antonette Bucase-Hizon-gonbang, BI acting intelligence chief, and Anna Katrina Ty-Gil, BI student desk head, to investigate and identify the "fake" alien students so their visas can be cancelled and they can be arrested and deported.

The new rules also state that only schools accredited by the DI, Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and Federation of Accrediting Agencies are authorized to accept foreign students.

A student visa is issued to a foreigner, at least 18 years old, who will be taking up a course at a university, university, college, or school duly authorized to admit foreign students.

On the other hand, an SSP is issued to a foreign student below 18, who will be studying in the elementary, secondary or special tertiary course of less than one year.

Schools are now required to establish a foreign student unit and submit to the BI a periodic report on foreigners enrolled in their school. Each school will designate its representative who will deal with the BI for the issuance or renewal of study visas or SSPs of foreign students.

BI also commit officers to the areas where the schools are situated were also required to submit to the bureau's main office a monthly report on study visas and permits processed by their respective offices.

Couple going after Tanay property titled to Ligots

By Leila B. Salaverria

DEFENDING who say they are the real owners of a Tanay, Rizal property that the government is seeking to recover from former military comptroller Jacinto Ligot have insisted that they should be allowed to intervene in the forfeiture case against him.

In their reply to the prosecutors' counterclaim on the matter, Shelley and Felipe Perez said they have a right to a portion of the seven-hectare portion lot in Tanay because they and several military officers and personnel are its true owners.

According to the Perezes, Ligot only acted as their representative during the sale because the original owner only wanted to deal only with a single buyer.

Government prosecutors earlier told the Sandiganbayan, where the forfeiture case is pending, that the Perezes' motion should be dismissed because the property in question is covered by a transfer certificate of title in the names of Ligot and his wife Rebelda.

The prosecutors noted that no memorandum of encumbrance, which would show other valid claims, was subsequently registered. They added that based on the title, the Ligots are the sole owners of the land.

But the Perezes said in their reply that the original owner of the lot, Maria Victoria Mendiores, had already insisted that a portion of her property was sold to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines through Jacinto Ligot.

Mendiores had testified that she only came to know Ligot when the AFP members and their dependents came to her with the intent to buy a portion of her property. She had told the buyers that she only wanted to deal with a single buyer to avoid the hassle of dealing with multiple buyers and the preparation of numerous documents. She then requested Ligot to represent all the buyers.

She further testified that Ligot only held the property in trust for the other individuals.

The Perezes said they intend to present several pieces of evidence, including Mendiores' affidavit on the circumstances behind the sale and the deed of Absolute Sale between Ligot and the other lot owners.

"Movants' sole purpose in requesting to be allowed to intervene is to protect their rights and preserve their interest in the subject property" they said, adding that they just want their properties to be excluded from any forfeiture the court may order.

Ligot is facing a forfeiture case for illegally amassing 42 pieces of wealth when he was still with the military. Members of his family were also included in the case.

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₱699 Manila to Bacolod, Catarman, Legazpi or Tuguegarao / Cebu to Surigao
₱799 Manila to Laoag, Puerto Princesa, Tacloban or Tagbilaran / Cebu to Butuan or Davao
₱1,099 Manila to Boracay (Caticlan) or Dumaguete / Cebu to Boracay (Caticlan), Dipolog, General Santos, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, Siargao or Zamboanga
₱1,499 Manila to Cagayan de Oro or Davao / Cebu to Legazpi / Davao to Zamboanga
₱1,799 Manila to Catbalogan, Dipolog or Surigao
₱1,999 Manila to Pagadian

INTERNATIONAL (LiteFARE)
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₱999 Cebu to Hong Kong
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₱1,499 Manila to Kota Kinabalu
₱1,699 Manila or Cebu to Singapore
₱1,899 Cebu to Hong Kong or Singapore
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Correction

IN THE NOV. 23 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Much talk about GMA, Erap ousting shoes"—mistakenly referred to Cabinet-rank Rep. Rodolfo "Dodi" Fernandez as a lawmaker from Albay.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Amorsolo Street, Makati City, fax No. 897-47-02-99; e-mail address, dayd@inquirer.com.ph.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

NOVEMBER 24 (Thursday)
Psalter: Week 2
Solemnity Christ the King
Dn 3:82, 83, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74
Glory, glory and eternal praise to him.
1st Reading: Rev 14:14-20

14 The King could not help giving the order that Daniel be thrown into the den; the men were thrown' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve faithfully, save you."

A stone was placed at the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and those of his nobles, so that nothing of Daniel's situation might otherwise be changed. Then the king returned to his palace and spent a sleepless night, refusing food and entertainment. Very early next morning, he rose and hurried to the lion's den. As he came near he called to an anguished voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, did your God whom you serve faithfully save you from the lions?"

Daniel answered, "Live forever, O king! My God sent his angel who closed the lions' mouths so that they did not hurt me. God did this because I am innocent in his sight. Nor have I wronged you, O king."...

Gospel: Lk 21:20-28

Jesus said to his disciples, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you must know that the time has come when it will be reduced to a wasteland. Then, if you are in Judea, flee to the mountains; if you are in the city, leave it, and those who are in the fields are not to enter the city.

"For these will be the days of its punishment and all that was announced in the Scriptures will be fulfilled. How hard it will be for pregnant women and for mothers with babies at the breast! For a great calamity will come upon the land, and Divine justice upon this people. They will be put to death by the sword or taken captive to all the countries; and Jerusalem will be trampled upon by the pagans until the time of the pagans is fulfilled.

"There there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of perplexity among the nations, from the roaring of the sea and its waves. People will faint with fear at the mere thought of what is to come upon the world, for the forces of the universe will be shaken. And at this time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now, when you see the first events, stand erect and lift up your heads, for your deliverance is drawing near."

Reflection:

"The Lord Jesus will then come in the form of a cross and demand Longfellow Christ the King" and what I love they were slain. "This sentence succinctly describes the final moments of the 13 Martyrs of Barbastro, Christian missionaries who were executed by anarchists, while they were still during the Spanish Civil War in 1936. In the face of death, they remained faithful to Jesus and were not daunted by any threat to their identities as religious missionaries. Why be afraid of what is to come? Christ will be there! Parents, grandparents, priests, nuns, but who can separate us from Christ? In not afraid because we have the assurance that with Christ, we are victors.

get hired

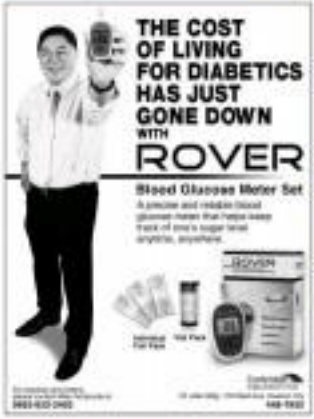
Dacer-Corbito trial stalled

THE SUSPENSE in the hearing yesterday of the Dacer-Corbito murder trial was re-set for Dec. 14 after it was learned that the Supreme Court had upheld a Court of Appeals ruling declaring Cesar Mancao III "incredible and untrustworthy" witness.

Prosecutor Philip Ellasps said Manila Judge Thelma Bunyi Medina received on Tuesday the decision of the high court junking the motion for reconsideration of the family of murdered publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer seeking to overturn a Court of Appeals decision to dismiss charges against Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson in connection with Mancao's testimony was based on hearsay.

Mancao, a former police officer who had implicated then PNP chief Lacson, was declared by the appeals court to be an incredible witness.

Ellasps said Judge Medina will have no choice but to act in accordance with the decision. Anyway I: Gandi



US VETERANS EQUITY FUND

Pinoy war vets got $221M

By Jerry E. Esplanada

MORE THAN 18,000 Filipino World War II veterans or their family members have received a total of $221 million (about P9.57 billion) in one-time compensation payments since 2009, according to the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) office in Manila.

In a report posted on the US Embassy website, the agency said the number "exceeds the 18,000 veterans estimated prior to the the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation (FVEC) benefits becoming law."

With over $36 million (about P923.8 million) in monthly disability-compensation payments to approximately 15,000 beneficiaries—half of whom are Filipino veterans or their family members—the VA expects to spend at least $192 million (about P8.31 billion) on the program.

"These monthly payments are in addition to the one-time lump sum payments made to Filipino war veterans and their survivors as part of the FVEC," said the report.

Last year, FVEC-related payments totaled $112,041,204 (about P4.846 billion).

Other benefits and services provided by the VA office include medical compensation and pension payments ($130,632 million); medical services ($7.85 million); and education-related benefits ($2.86 million).

Early this month, US Ambassador to the Philippines Harry Thomas Jr. honored the "unparalleled service and sacrifice" of both American and Philippine war veterans.

Speaking during the Veterans Day they at the American Cemetery in Taguig City, Thomas noted that "for over two centuries, our countries have produced the finest men and women in conflict."

"Many are gathered here today and many more have lost their lives in battle. Our veterans are our liberators and our protectors. Their service made for our freedom and the democracy we cherish," he said.

At the same time, Thomas stressed the need to "honor those who answered the call to service when the US found it necessary to take up arms to defend that which we hold dear."

"Among them are our service members in Iraq, Afghanistan and other areas of conflict and instability who have chosen to be away from their loved ones in order to preserve their freedom," he said.

According to Thomas, "we owe our service members and veterans a debt of gratitude."

"Our debt to our veterans cannot be repaid with a mere farewell welcome alone. We must also ensure that our veterans are well taken care of and have opportunities for continuing education and disability and health benefits," he emphasized.

Thomas pointed out that the VA "has been in the Philippines since 1945."

"Next year, it celebrates 90 years of committed service to veterans in the Philippines. Our VA office in Manila is the only VA office located overseas, a testament to the strong ties and willpower between the United States and the Philippines."

NBI turns 75 years

By Jaymee T. Gamil

AT 75 YEARS, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has not a goal for achieving modernization by year 2020, director Magtanggol Gatdula said in a speech at the agency's diamond anniversary celebration yesterday.

With the NBI Clearance System, the agency still be implementing an online payment system by Dec. 1 to make the processing for NBI clearances faster and more convenient, according to Gatdula.

The agency also began implementing this year the National Biometric Clearance System (NBCS) whereby applicants' fingerprints are stored for easy retrieval of records.

President Aquino attended the anniversary ceremonies with his sister secretary, Leila de Lima, and Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

Mr. Aquino thanked the NBI's 1,300 employees for the agency's accomplishments in the past year, including its campaign against human trafficking which yielded more than 90 arrests and 168 rescues of minors and women and the arrest of members of the West African drug syndicate victimizing Filipinos abroad whom they use as drug mules.

UN to give $38M for people displaced by Mindanao fighting

By Jocelyn R. Ky

THE UNITED Nations (UN) will next year post some $37.9 million in humanitarian aid into Central Mindanao, saying its people have been unfairly affected by "cycles of displacements" due to armed conflicts and natural disasters.

Catherine Bragg, UN humanitarian affairs assistant secretary-general and deputy emergency relief coordinator, made the announcement yesterday, at a press conference in Makati following a two-day visit to Mindanao.

Bragg recently flew to the country for a five-day mission to personally see the impact of conflict and natural disasters on the region.

Relief needed

In her report yesterday, Bragg said nearly 700,000 people in Central Mindanao were still in dire need of humanitarian relief, protection and livelihood support, particularly households in conflict- and flood-affected areas.

"The needs of vulnerable people in Mindanao are complex, and we must address them through a concerted effort," she said.

"I am deeply concerned by the impact of cycles of displacement, particularly those caused by armed confrontations between government forces and armed groups, and clan fighting," she said.

She said a humanitarian action plan for $37.9 million will be launched in 2012, prioritizing "protection activities" in the region. The proposed figure is slightly higher than the $33.3 million which the UN and its partners had asked for Mindanao this year.

"A major way that UN agencies and our partners could provide protection is by presence, simply being somewhere and making sure that those who would perpetrate (violence) mustn't not be able to do it," Bragg explained.

Assistance boost

The UN will be increasing the number of humanitarian workers in Central Mindanao to be able to provide education and assistance to the victims of armed conflict and natural disasters, she said.

The funds will also help in expanding on the basic needs of affected families, particularly food, clean water, proper sanitation and hygiene, livelihood projects, basic health services, including maternal health services for women, among others.

Bragg said that although the number of displaced people in Mindanao has steadily dwindled since 2000, many communities remain vulnerable, and in need of assistance.

During her mission in Central Mindanao, Bragg visited several humanitarian projects in Maguindanao province, particularly Datu Piang and Pamalian.

"All these field visits gave me a clearer vision of the magnitude of the challenges we face in Mindanao and the very good work being done by aid agencies to provide humanitarian assistance," she said.

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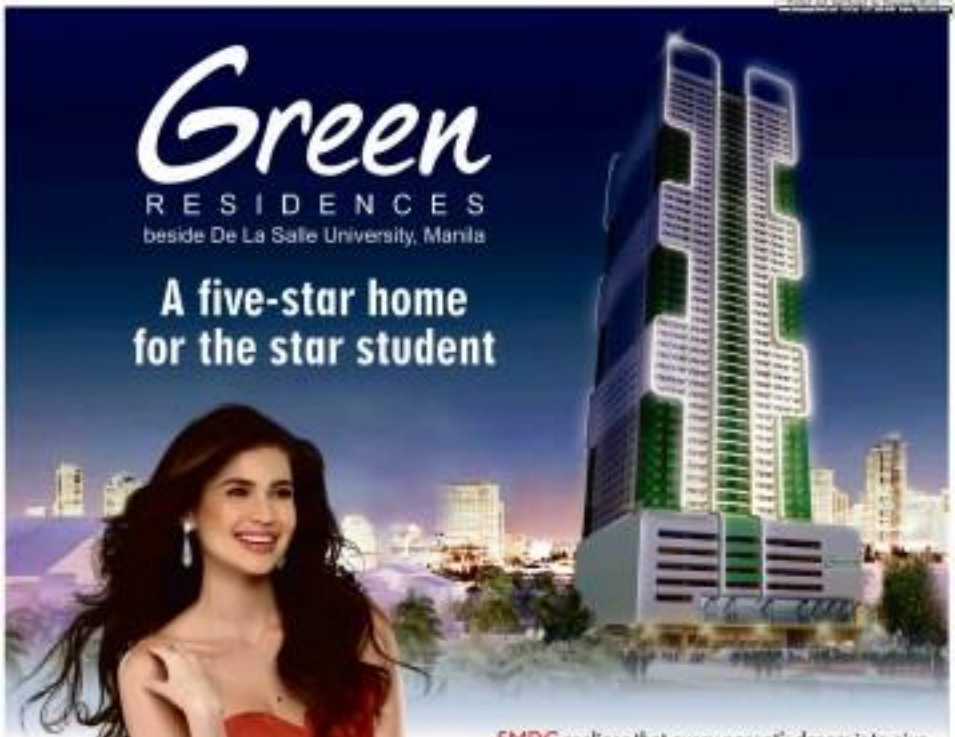

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need a job?

By Leila B. Salaverria

OVERSEAS officers of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) failed to remit more than ₱21 million in collections to Owwa's Manila account in 2010, putting these funds at risk of misappropriation, according to the Commission on Audit (COA).

In its 2010 report on the Owwa, the COA said dollar and euro collections from nations foreign posts amounting to ₱21.387 million had gone uncontested "for a long period of time."

These unremitted collections for the agency's voluntary membership program, under which overseas workers obtain assistance for themselves and their families for various concerns.

Owwa's overseas officers are required to remit their monthly collections to the Owwa Land Bank Manila dollar account not later than the 15th day of the following month, the COA said.

But upon scrutiny of the records, the audit agency found that ₱10.587 million had not been remitted for periods ranging from one to 18 years.

Instead of the officers concerned can still in the service, four have absconded or are almost without trace, while another 14 have resigned or moved to another agency the COA found. It also noted that collections from Dubai-based hotels (October 2007 to December 2010) were remitted by an employee of the Department of Labor.

Because the collections were not remitted in a timely manner, the funds are at risk of being misused, the COA warned.

With the period of time that has lapsed and continued failure of the collection officers, particularly those with huge amounts of accountability, to remit the money, the possibility of the funds having been misappropriated or cannot be documented, the COA said.

It is also concerned that some of the funds may already be lost, it said.

"Moreover, recovering the [money] may become difficult and may even be doubtful for those who have absconded or have been separated from the service," it said.

The audit agency told the Owwa that it should demand the immediate remittance of the full amount from the collecting officers concerned.

The Owwa should also withhold payment of any money to the collecting officers, and hold them severally liable, it said.

The Owwa should get in touch with those who have gone AWol and demand that they settle their accountability for the unremitted collections, the COA said.

The Owwa, in response, has told the COA that it has now demanded letters from employers and had withheld their salaries and other benefits in the meantime. It has also sent notices to the collection officers who are no longer with the Owwa, but are still in the service or the labor department, it said.

It also vowed to exert effort to find those who had absconded so they can be held accountable.

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Imelda assets in SJ in peril

BOOK OF Nono Ilgi, Imelda Marcos, the widow of the ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos, is on the point of losing her San Juan properties.

The Commission on Audit (COA) has assigned a team to appraise Imelda's three properties in San Juan (See Sto. Sto. Sto.) that are scheduled to undergo an earlier public auction sale for only ₱20 million, plus ₱3 million in damages, to the government.

The Sandiganbayan Sheriff and Security Division earlier asked the COA for assistance in conducting the valuation of the three San Juan properties of Imelda that it had earlier seized in order to enforce a court ruling.

The three properties – consists of a 1,000-square meter lot in 266 Mariano Marcos, Montreal, a 931-sq.m. lot on Gen. M. Reyes, Maytunas, and an 864-sq.m. lot in 8 Llanera corner Maxalo street, Montreal.

In a Nov. 11 letter to COA chair Grace Pulido-Tan, acting chief judicial staff officer Albert de la Cruz said the properties to be appraised are the subject of love and sale.

The Sandiganbayan 5th Division issued an alias writ of execution against Imelda's properties after she failed to comply with the court ruling to pay the ₱11 million to the government.

The court earlier ruled that ₱10 million had been illegally transferred from the National Food Authority's (NFA) account to various account as victims of the late dictator.

The money represented the 30% rebate granted by the Philippine National Line, a company created to establish a reliable shipping service.

Leila B. Salaverria

MEXICAN FIRST LADY
President Aquino receives Mexico's first lady Margarita Zavala de Calderon, at the Malacañang Palace during her courtesy call Wednesday in Malacañang. The wife of Mexican President Felipe Calderon arrived yesterday on a personal visit. Although no such title is recognized in her country, she is acknowledged as the country's first lady. [more in A2 story]

PAL back to normal flight operations today

PHILIPPINE Airlines (PAL) is resuming full operations today with the restoration of flights and the transition to pre-outsourcing levels at its Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 2 just in time for the onset of the holiday season.

Also restored starting today is PAL's full in-flight meal service which was briefly interrupted by the outsourcing of food preparation services and by the protest staged by former PAL employees at the airline's In-flight Center in Pasay City.

All PAL flights will be consolidated at the airline's home base in Naia 2. Flights from Manila to such cities as Seoul, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Oriental and Zamboanga will now depart and arrive at Naia 2. These flights were temporarily housed at Naia 3 to decongest the Centennial Terminal.

Earlier, PAL resumed its cargo operations on both domestic and international flights.

4 flights to Davao

Davao, one of PAL's major destinations, has returned to its normal four-daily flight schedule exactly a month after the airline embarked on its outsourcing program. PAL uses its flagship Boeing 747-400 to twice daily flights to Davao.

"As PAL's service providers gradually fill up their manpower complement, all operational requirements, from passenger handling to ground handling of all PAL flights, shall now be done in PAL's home base at Terminal 2," PAL spokesperson Cielo Villaluna said.

Villaluna added that PAL's signature onsale presentation and its wide array of complimentary drinks are also back on board.

"We thank our loyal passengers for bearing with us during these difficult times. We promise to exceed your expectations the next time you board a PAL flight," she said.

PAL used to operate 81 (81) domestic and 30 international flights daily.

Starting today, daily domestic flights will average 56 to 60 while international flights will remain at 30, for an average daily flights of 140.

After it implemented its outsourcing program on Oct. 1, that led to the separation of more than 2,300 workers, PAL had to reduce domestic flights by 30 percent, while international flights were down 12 percent.

Work stoppage

The flight reduction came shortly after protesting workers staged what management called an illegal work stoppage prior to the implementation of the airline's outsourcing plan.

In-flight operations and Ramp Department personnel workers encamped at the gates of PAL's In-flight Center along NIA Road, Pasay City, blocking the source of PAL-supplied on-board services to the facility.

PAL filed criminal charges of grave coercion against 41 of its former employees before the Pasay City prosecutor's office after they failed to a PAL truck from leaving the facility's premises on Oct. 29.

Members of the Philippine Airlines Employees Association Inspection Module of the In-flight Center on Sept. 26 to protest the airline's outsourcing program. The facility houses the airline's in-flight services department and in-flight kitchen where meals for all PAL flights are prepared.

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DPWH rushing 376 projects

By Jovelyn Aring

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) yesterday said it will be pushing nearly 376 infrastructure projects as the year ends with the recent release of an additional ₱5.5 billion from the economic stimulus fund.

Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson said in a statement the DPWH was "vigorously implementing" 376 projects, which include the construction and rehabilitation of roads, bridges, flood control and others, many of which have been damaged by the recent typhoons.

The additional funds will also go to the payment of validated right-of-way acquisition as well as the replenishment of the "Quick Response Fund" for calamity purposes, Singson said.

"The President's instruction to DPWH is to fast-track disbursements and optimize the use of the stimulus fund in the execution of these additional infrastructure projects that will help boost the country's economy and also provide job generation and employment," he said.

"The stimulus package came from our savings from unused appropriations in 2010 and first three quarters of 2011, as a result of our prudent spending," he added.

According to Singson, the 376 projects already have completed programs of work, and many are quick-disbursing projects below ₱50 million.

The ₱5.5 billion distributed to the DPWH's 16 regional offices was broken down as follows: National Capital Region, ₱208.1 million; Cordillera Administrative Region, ₱345.16 million; Ilocos, ₱441.25 million; Cagayan Valley, ₱237 million; Central Luzon, ₱463.6 million; Calabarzon, ₱569 million; Mimaropa, ₱543.3 million; Bicol, ₱452.97 million; Western Visayas, ₱495.4 million; Central Visayas, ₱258 million; Eastern Visayas, ₱329.7 million; Zamboanga Peninsula, ₱380.3 million; Northern Mindanao, ₱250 million; Davao, ₱383.9 million; Soccsargen, ₱240.27 million; and Caraga, ₱315.7 million.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Cheap 'skates' ride takes a deadly turn

By Joan Bocandor Jr.
Pamplona, Camarines Sur

2 killed in latest railway accident

IT WAS not a train that ran over and killed 6-year-old Christian Aniceto while he was crossing the railroad at a bend in Barangay San Ramon in Pamplona, Camarines Sur, on Nov. 9. Neither was 64-year-old Bernardo Sumar a train passenger when he was thrown off and died along the tracks.

Aniceto and Sumar were fatalities in an accident involving "skates," a motor-driven contraption mimicking roller skates but riding on railway tracks.

Skates is the cheapest and most accessible means of public conveyance in poor villages living near the tracks of the Philippine National Railways (PNR). Farmers from Barangays Feliciano, San Ramon, Stanford and San Rafael, all in Pamplona, take the ride to bring their produce to the market.

Far as long as there is no cheaper way of going in and out of the villages and despite safety hazards, the residents continue to take the risky ride.

With a platform measuring at least 16 square feet in area and made of wood and bamboo, the contraption can load up to 10 passengers sitting on two wooden benches. The platform is outfitted with bearings as wheels.

Improved design

Unlike before when the driver pushed the skates to start chilling, the improved design includes a 7-10 hp motor, pulley and belt connected to a mechanism that hones the wheel bearings.

When the latest accident occurred early this month, the skates was overloaded with 17 mourners who were headed back to Stanford after attending a burial at a cemetery in the town center. In July, a skates driver was sideswiped and killed by a PNR train in Barangay Mangkawayan in the neighboring town of Libmanan.

Jesús Reganos, PNR general manager, says the use of the railway line by skates is prohibited, but he says the police to task in enforcing the ban in the localities. He says he has been talking with skates owners and operators, appealing to them to stop their operations.

He, however, believes that once more train runs are scheduled, skates drivers and operators will eventually be discouraged from plying their routes because of the increasing risks.

Joseph Dri, 28, a skates driver for the last seven years, says that although the contraption is light enough for two adults to carry, it could easily be derailed when it runs over other "pedestrians," such as a frog stuck on the tracks.

Dri says he collects only P5 per passenger compared to the two-way P20-fare being charged by tricycle drivers taking the access road to the highway or by jeepney drivers taking the highway to the town center. He earns an average of P150-50 in four to 10 hours of ferrying passengers and their cargoes.

Not registered

Mayor Dominic Imperial could not estimate the current number of skates because the mode of transport was not registered with any government agency. "It's actually illegal but we cannot stop its operation because it's the most accessible and cheapest means of transportation for some 3,000 residents or 500 farming families in my town," he said.

Pamplona does not have funds to build new roads that will directly connect the villages to the center, Imperial says. Stationed on the vast plains of the Bicol River Basin, it is a fourth-class municipality (pop.: 35,000) with some P47 million in yearly income.

More than 100 skates ply the 52-kilometer railway line traversing Pamplona, Del says. Skate travel through the highway from Naga City covers a distance of 15 km.

Benito Bermudez, 53, says she is aware of the risk when riding on the skates, especially with commuter trains running regularly every day. But she says it is still the cheapest and best means of travel for villagers going to their farms.

Constancio Toledano, manager of the PNR section in the Bigbawanin (Quezon)-Bicol line, has suggested to the PNR main office to commission a train to have the mourners every hour on what hours do urban travelling through the main highways like Edsa and stop anywhere to pick up passengers.

"With that kind of frequency I don't think the skates could still use the railroad," Toledano says.

He recalled that PNR administrations in the late 1980s to the early 2000 had registered special train operations to coordinate and imposed duties using the railroad. The drivers and operators were given seminars and fines before their skates were released, he said, and this had resulted in a dramatic decrease in the number of skates.

Toledano believes that the skates will be totally removed if the railways are finally freed of thousands of squatters living along the tracks from Bicol to Metro Manila.

"SKATES" is the main mode of transportation in farming villages along the railroad of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) in Pamplona, Camarines Sur. JOAN BOCANDOR JR.

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Across the NATION

Shortfalls sweeping revenue offices

Low infrastructure spending, manufacturing decline tagged key causes

'We are close to a P1-billion shortfall...'

TACLOBAN CITY—A slowdown in government infrastructure spending in the region is making it impossible for Eastern Visayas' revenue collectors to meet their targets, a top Bureau of Internal Revenue official in the region said.

Oscadalio Mendoza, BIR Eastern Visayas director, on Tuesday said it would require a miracle for the regional revenue office to meet its collections target of P9.3 billion this year. The regional BIR, he said, had collected only P5.1 billion so far.

In 2010, Mendoza said, the regional BIR collected P5.9 billion from January to October.

Bulk of the region's collections come from value added tax (VAT) on government infrastructure projects which generated P799.8 million in taxes this year and which was lower than the Pl. 10 billion in taxes collected on infrastructure projects last year.

BIR charges 12 percent VAT on construction of government infrastructure projects.

Also this year, the Eastern Visayas BIR collected P1.3 billion in income taxes, P141 million in taxes on sales of firms not registered for VAT, P30.6 million in excise taxes and P248.6 million in other taxes, according to Mendoza.

Of the six revenue offices of the regional BIR, Tacloban City had the highest collection at P1.5 billion, followed by Ormoc, P551 million; Catbalogan, P414 million; Maasin, P264 million; Calbayog, P234 million and Borongan, P193 million.

Mendoza said the regional BIR would find other ways to increase tax collection and reduce its shortfall.

He said all six field offices of the regional BIR were also directed to continue tax-mapping operations to cover all possible sources of taxes and increase collection.

In Cebu City, revenue officials said they may have to lower their collection targets in anticipation of a shortfall.

Rustan C. Silverio, Cebu customs collector, said the collection target was P9.5 billion and he suspects it to be lowered after the national target was reduced by P42 billion from P920 billion to P878 billion.

"Right now, we are close to a P1-billion shortfall," said Silverio. "If the P9.5-billion target will be reduced, then we can save our target," he said.

The district's collection target from January to October was set at P7.2 billion but actual collections reached only P6.4 billion, or a shortfall of at least P1.2 billion.

Silverio said the customs district office also failed to meet its collection target of P7.6 billion in 2010. He said the district was able to collect only about P7 billion in 2010, or a shortfall of P600 million.

But of the reasons for the shortfall, he said, was the decline in the volume of imports which could be attributed to a decline in manufacturing output.

From January to October, the volume of imported goods that entered this city's port was only 1.1 billion kilograms, which is lower than the 1.9 billion kg of imports in 2010.

Out of 17 customs districts in the country, only five have attained collection targets and these are small ports, according to Silverio.

Earlier this year, Silverio had requested for a lower collection target because failure to meet the current target may lead to layoffs of customs employees. Joey Galvez and Irene R. Silos Cruz, Inquirer Visayas

In fight vs malaria, PPP found effective

DAVAO CITY—The public-private partnership (PPP) concept that Malacañang had flaunted as the latest way to get projects done actually worked in Compostela Valley where a PPP program was credited with bringing down cases of malaria from 174 to four.

Cynthia Micaballeyas, malaria program coordinator of the provincial health office, said the number of malaria cases in the province had gone down to four since the PPP program started in 2006.

Micaballeyas said in 2007, the province was battling with a surge in the number of malaria cases that reached 174 and which health authorities said was alarming.

MOSQUITO nets laced with insecticides are distributed to residents in Compostela Valley. CZAR RAMOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

In 2006, the provincial government entered into a partnership with Filipinas Shell Foundation and international agencies like the World Health Organization to start a massive program to combat malaria.

The partnership paid off, said Micaballeyas. By the end of 2008, the number of malaria cases in the province had gone down by half.

The decline in the number of cases continued. In 2009, only 30 cases were reported and in 2010, it was down to only 11 cases.

Micaballeyas said the province's health workers should also get credit for the successful war on malaria. They had helped detect and treat cases early, she said.

A dish's take sophisticated gadgets or expensive technology to get the antimalaria program going.

In many instances, all that program workers had to do was distribute mosquito nets laced with insecticides, spray insecticides in known mosquito breeding places and remove possible breeding areas.

This year alone, she said, more than 29,000 insecticide-laced mosquito nets had been distributed and 1,385 houses were sprayed with insecticides. Allan Nawal, Inquirer Mindanao

Narcs say courier firms now used for drugs

THE HORSE is central to Benguet's celebration of "Adivay," an annual feast in its fifth year of bringing together the province's different tribes.

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—An international agency on Thursday seized a 1.5-kilogram shipment of methamphetamine hydrochloride or "shabu" stuffed inside a TV set and sent through a courier company prompting a top antinarcotic official to conclude that the movement of illegal drugs from Manila to Mindanao now passes through courier-assisted commercial channels.

The man who picked up the shipment, identified as Sammy Tuscip, was arrested and is now detained. His mobile phone yielded numbers of politicians and police officers.

Robert Oprena, head of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Northern Mindanao, said the seized shabu shipment was PDEA's biggest haul in Cagayan de Oro.

Oprena said PDEA relied on a tip on the incoming shipment, which was being made through a courier company that he refused to name.

He said PDEA coordinated with the courier company to set up a trap for anyone who would pick up the drug shipment in the courier company's branch as a mail item.

On Monday Tuscip turned up at the courier branch to pick up the package, which was found on a TV set.

Two packets of shabu weighing a total of 1.5 kg were found stuffed in the picture tube of the 29-inch TV set.

Tuscip, according to Oprena, wanted to tell the mail man about to clear before claiming the package. After signing the receipt for the package, Tuscip proceeded to the mall's parking lot.

As Tuscip was about to enter a brand new Isuzu Crosswind van (license plate UBL 111) PDEA agents pounced on him and announced the arrest. Tuscip did not resist.

Oprena said based on conservative estimates, the drug haul was worth at least P15 million.

Oprena quoted Tuscip as saying during interrogation that the drugs were bound for Sagadan City but Oprena said he doubted whether Tuscip was telling the truth.

"We believe it was either for Bukidnon or Central Mindanao," Oprena said. PDEA, he said, received a tip suspect with the same nickname, Tuscip, during a raid in Bukidnon in September.

Oprena said he believes if Tuscip was working for a big drug syndicate. "We disrupted their operation and business," he said.

Oprena said PDEA would request for a forensic examination of the mobile phone seized from Tuscip as this could contain "a mine of data."

He said initially, PDEA saw on the phone's list of contacts "families (names of politicians and police officers."

Oprena said PDEA would investigate how extensive Tuscip's operation was and if he had used the same courier company to receive drugs in the past.

PDEA, he said, had already asked the courier company for a list of possible transactions Tuscip had with it.

As charges against Tuscip were being prepared, Oprena said PDEA was also trying to secure CCTV footage at the courier firm's Manila branch from where the package was sent. —Bobby Lagsa, Inquirer Mindanao

'Adivay': From clan gathering to Benguet feast

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—From a simple gathering of family members, the "Adivay" (an Ibaloi term meaning coming together) has become the bond that continues to forge unity and cooperation among the tribes of Benguet.

On Saturday, the province opened the 5th Adivay Festival by offering at least 23 native pigs and carabaos to the spirits of their ancestors and native gods in a "canao" (native feast) as thanksgiving. Ibaloi, Kalanguya and Kankanaey from 13 towns gathered in the capital for a day of merrymaking and a celebration of their culture and tradition.

Through the Adivay the highlight of the province's 72-day homecoming celebration, the people of Benguet also celebrated their triumph over mammoth and natural calamities through the years.

Incgot Mayor Oscar Cariaso Jr. said Ibaloi in his town suffered expulsion and displacement when Spaniards and Americans started exploring and mining gold at the turn of the 20th century.

"We lost our identity. There were no safety measures and laws that would protect our people so they could stay in their own ancestral lands," he said.

Many were also displaced when dams were built in the province starting in the 1960s.

"Landslides are an aftermath of decades-old mining in our town ... but our direction now is taking care of our environment," Cariaso said.

Bauko town put up a tent to showcase local products during the festival held at a open-air venue in Barangay Mangal here.

"This gathering is an inspiration for all of us. Adivay helps us to move on despite the hardships," Cariaso also said.

Dolores Cabreza, 65, an Ibaloi, finds a deep connection to her community through the Adivay, especially when she joins the "tayaw" (dance of celebration).

In the old days, Adivay was more of an intimate gathering of family or clan members, said Guillermo Fianza, provincial environment officer.

"It is easier to invite people today because of modern technology but in the old times, the tribal leaders would have to assign an eminent or a "mengaleb" to go around the villages, who would walk or ride on a horse, to invite people to the Adivay," Fianza said. Many the horse is an important part of Benguet's social and economic life, the festival always features horse races in its activities, such as parades, races and other games.

"From a family reunion, Adivay now [engulf] in a larger scale to all of its constituent for a feast. It makes our connection to each other deeper and more meaningful," said Gov. Nestor Fongwan. —Rodrive Cabuyo, Inquirer Northern Luzon

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COA defied as Cebu port men get ₱50,000 bonus

By Jhonren Napalicon
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—The Cebu Port Authority (CPA) released the bonus of its employees on Nov. 3 despite an order by the Commission on Audit (COA) demanding the refund of ₱21.79 million in perks the port workers enjoyed in 2009 and 2010.

CPA Deputy General Manager Timoy Uriarte yesterday said each employee had received ₱50,000 of the ₱90,000 cash gift and the unserved bonus equivalent to their five-month salary.

The remaining ₱40,000 of the cash gift will be released before the end of 2011, he added.

Uriarte said only a court order can stop the release of the remaining cash gift.

COA has ordered the refund of ₱11.79 million in perks awarded to CPA employees in 2009 and 2010 because they violated Republic Act No. 6686, which prescribes the annual Christmas bonus for government officials.

COA said the perks were released without the approval of the Department of Budget and Management.

The perks, called "traditional benefits," consist of a mid-year bonus equivalent to one month's basic pay, a yearend bonus equivalent of two month salary and ₱50,000 in cash gift.

Uriarte said the COA released the midyear bonus in June while the initial cash gift and yearend bonus were distributed on June 1.

He said the COA ruling was a "mere opinion." But he said the legality of the benefits had been upheld by a regional trial court.

Uriarte recalled that when the COA was still an unified agency of the Philippine Ports Authority, workers were already enjoying those perks.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Let us not forget

EDITORIAL

THE SECOND anniversary of the infamous Maguindanao massacre was marked yesterday on a pessimistic note and with diminished hope, the multiple-murder case against members of the powerful Ampatuan clan and their minions still having moved beyond the prosecution's presentation of witnesses. The families of the victims—the formal count is 57, with the remains of the 58th yet to be found—are understandably despondent, gripped by grief, bogged down in frustration over the glacial pace of the case, and, as a result of the death of loved one and/or primary breadwinner, hard put to get an adult their lives or even to make ends meet.

Two years after the grisly slaughter that shocked even the jaded around the world, the countenances of the task ahead remains. Only 32 of the prosecution's at least 300 witnesses have been presented. As many as 103 of the 196 suspects are still at large (and "visiting around" in Cotabato City, Ronel Baguires, a lawyer for the families, said in a TV interview). Of the 93 in custody, 20 have yet to be arraigned, among them Zaldy Ampatuan, a former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Of the 64 who have been arraigned, 50 have submitted petitions for bail, adding to the weighty load unclogging the court of Judge Jocelyn Solis Reyes.

If the numbers are daunting, imagine the difficulties (not only logistics-wise) that have arisen from transporting witnesses to the trial venue at Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig City from Mindanao, and back. Imagine as well the travails of the families thrust by the massacre into a life of penury, of women in the twilight of their lives suddenly called upon to muster not only the wherewithal but also the strength (both physical and not) to bring up orphaned grandchildren. Imagine finally the lingering sorrow of the survivors, including a child unable to comprehend the disappearance of her mother from her life and now exhibiting the crippling effects of the beloved's absence.

But the law appears blind to these things, not even to a daughter's enduring devastation over the loss of a father who took her and her siblings to and from school, helped them with their homework, and bought them toys. There is no indication that accountability for the Nov. 23, 2009, massacre—a study in "barbarism," according to a cable from the US Embassy in Manila released by WikiLeaks—will be pinpointed in the near future. A defense lawyer quoted in an Inquirer report said that he and his colleagues expected the trial to piled on for 18 years, and that he himself intended to persevere on less than $20 witnesses for his client. (The halfway sensitive observer would find the remark laughable if it were not so odious, as odious as the assumed lawyer's claim that the case—from eyewitness accounts, a horrendous occurrence involving the murder in Ampatuan, Maguindanao, of 57 people among whom were 32 journalists and media workers, the vehicles that carried some of them found in the same pit, a backhoe bearing marks of the local government, spent shells from high-powered firearms—should not be prejudged.)

Last Tuesday, the next of kin of 15 of the victims filed a P15-million civil suit against Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who was president at the time of the massacre, and whose patronage of the Ampatuans allowed them to rise to their position of power and influence. More than a bid for legal relief—the damages are a pittance—it is an act affirming the conviction of their search for justice in the face of great odds.

And the odds of overcoming the climate of impunity loom ever larger with the continued killing of journalists. When he took power in 2010, President Aquino promised accountability for murderers, crooks and others who have committed crimes against the people. But the records show that since the Maguindanao massacre, six journalists have been slain (and scores of human rights workers, political activists, labor leaders and others have been abducted, tortured and killed). The prevailing climate has likewise proved inhospitable for journalists to freely exercise their profession, especially those in the rural areas where crime occurs as much in the light of day as in the dark of night.

But despite diminished hope, it is crucial to always remember, to always speak about, the fallen and what was done to them. It would be treachery to forget.

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Lessons from the Maguindanao massacre

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

IT HAS been two years since the gruesome mass murder that took place on a lonely dirt road in Maguindanao shook and awakened us to the terrifying reality of local warlords who conduct themselves as if they were beyond the reach of the law. Here it not be the fact that the majority of the victims were media people, the case against the Ampatuans might not have reached the courts. Despite the million members in which the Maguindanao voters were killed, it is not unlikely that the perpetrators of this crime would have succeeded in localizing the conflict and eventually settling it according to customary rules.

Indeed, the initial reports on the incident hinted at a clan war between the outmatched Ampatuans and the feisty Mangudadatus. But there was no clan war here, no rido between feuding clans. United "Unos" Mangudadatu, the head of the Mangudadatu family, was a relatively, a relative, an ally of the Ampatuans. The conflict happened to hold the Ampatuan patriarch that he was eating the governorship of the province. As it turned out, another Ampatuan son, Sure Unsay Ampatuan, had already lined up to succeed his brother, Zaldy, the incumbent governor.

In fora of political parties, we have rival political clans in the Philippines, or rival factions of the same clan, who alternate with one another in wielding governmental power. National politicians who command a lot of resources typically serve to bring them together under a common banner, working out an arrangement where each party gets its share. If Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had intervened to tame the arrogance of her Ampatuan cousins, perhaps there would have been no massacre. The governorship would have passed on to Toto Mangudadatu, or he could have been made vice-dolor his ambition and wait till the next election.

But in November 2009, GMA was preoccupied with other things. Her presidency was reeling in an end, and she was busy preparing for her own unprecedented run as representative of Pampanga's second district. Unlike in previous elections, Maguindanao was broken from her mind. Her party's presidential candidate, Gilbert Teodoro, was scoring very low in pre-election surveys, a casualty of the public's disaffection with the GMA administration. The threat Gibo had an access to the kind of public resources that GMA must seldom struggles in both the 2009 and 2007 elections. Thus, he was in no position to take on the kingpin role that Gloria had so masterfully played for nine years in the realm of his politicians.

Without a patron in Manila, the Ampatuans knew that it was even more imperative for them to consolidate their hold on Maguindanao. They were not interested in Teodoro, who clearly favored Mangudadatu. Their tight grip on Maguindanao politics, as proven by their capacity to deliver blocks of crucial votes, made them think that, regardless of who was president in Malacañang, the nation's politicians would have no choice but to seek their support. In turn, they expected to be shielded from any accountability for those they helped.

This assumption for the sura of impunity that one instantly senses in the demeanor of the cocky Datu Unsay Ampatuan. The man is obviously not used to being restrained by the law. When he comes from, his family was the law-governor was himself at its principal constituency. So firty was the chief's hold on Maguindanao that they had to jail to name the towns over which they ruled after themselves. The question is: how could a supposedly modern state such as the Philippines allow one clan not only to reserve positions in government to themselves but also to routinely manipulate the nation's electoral process? The voting patterns coming out of the various municipalities of the province every election year were so statistically improbable that anyone in the Commission on Elections with a little integrity would have nullified them.

But, unless we know how the nation's political system and its local variants came to serve their own interests, we may never understand how a feud clan led by a patriarch who can neither read nor write can be left alone to rule an entire province with impunity. The Ampatuans represent only the most extreme form of warlordism. All over the country, there are families like them who have controlled the levers of local politics across generations. Their stories today might be more educated and more polished, but they are no less inclined to use extortion and violence to achieve their goals.

All this, fortunately, is ready to change. As our country enters modernity, our territorial system becomes increasingly differentiated internally. Law emerges as an autonomous system, differentiated from politics, family religion, and other ties. And so, it no longer matters that someone, whether the Maguindanaos and the Ampatuan eventually come together and decide to amicably settle their differences. The ensuing peace, which is the goal of customary law, will not mean the end. Modern law goes beyond the settlement of disputes. Its principal function is to establish out notions of what is legal and illegal.

Viewed from this perspective, we may begin to understand why modern legal proceedings are weighed down by procedural technicalities that often delay the practical administration of justice. From a decision on a case to effect requires the rules by which society in enumerates itself against brute conflicts. We have just begun to take the law seriously. We must be patient.

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Rule of justice

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S MIND-BOGGLING how some people are depicting Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the object of the most violent oppression.

I never heard these levels of consternation when Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani and Col. Alexander Balutan were jailed for instituting against Arroyo. I never heard these levels of protest when Jun Lozada was kidnapped for daring to speak out against unmentioned greed. I never heard these levels of exasperation when the political activists were massacred in the name of fighting insurgency.

I agree completely: Government should observe due process as steadfastly resolutely and unmovedly as it means to run Arroyo to the ground. Those said to agree and again. The only way to keep Arroyo here is to disrupt her preferably for stealing the presidency in 2004, which is the original sin, and not for 2007, which is merely derivative. Government may not do that by invoking a law she herself passed to prevent her enemies from leaving the country. That is a tyrannical law, one that has no place in a democracy, unless one that has no place in a government wanting to bow to the straight and narrow, wanting to be the opposite of the past. You cannot reverse tyranny by the ways of tyranny, you can only do so by the ways of decency.

I am glad in this respect that the government has gone ahead and charged Arroyo with electoral fraud, however that seems a little rushed.

Set having said that, when did the government see appropriately in point of law or decency in preventing the former first couple from hightailing it to the people of strike ago?

Why should Erlinda Ines to the widow of the Supreme Court without challenge? for that matter, why should the people of this country submit to the wisdom of the Supreme Court without question, when at the very least it is headed by someone who should never have been a chief Justice, who should have resigned long ago out of basic decency and who should have inhibited himself out of fundamental justice from rendering judgment on the one person he owes his life to? What at the very least the Supreme Court bothers justices who should never have been justices, who should have been thrown out of the bench long ago for being an outrage to the true, the good, the beautiful, especially the beautiful?

As Bruno retrospectively, which only proved how Senator Correa could not have been acting objectively on the matter, his mouthpiece, Jose Midas Marquez, would dismiss the Court's position on the TRO by claiming it was binding, although the Arroyos had not complied with one of the basic conditions for having the country.

Where was the flash on government's part? By all the wiles of law and justice, P-Noy had right id say by all the ways of heaven and earth, P-Noy had right at stop.

But it's more than that, far, far more than that.

What in God's name has happened to our memory? Have we forgotten who Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is? Have we forgotten what she has done to the country? Have we forgotten the lying, cheating and stealing? Have we forgotten the killings? Have we forgotten how in less than the wicked were rewarded and the righteous punished? Have we forgotten how everything was turned upside down in this country? Have we forgotten how like Midas in reverse, Marquez at not, she turned everything she touched, including freedom, including decency, including human life itself from gold to dross? Have we forgotten the warping and gnashing of teeth of a people conditioned to living hell who thought they would never see the light of day, to soon catch a glimpse of heaven?

The least that P-Noy deserves is appreciation for what he is doing, which is to give a long-suffering people justice, which is to give a much disillusioned people a monumental lesson in crime and punishment. The mess that P-Noy deserves is the gratitude of the nation for turning the world back on its face, for setting free the innocent and jailing the guilty, for making sure by the implacable demonstration of the law that arrests tyrants that no can truly say, "Never again!" It's the clearest sign by far that P-Noy means to rule the road not taken, and make all the difference. It's the strongest proof by far that P-Noy means to curb corruption, in the profoundest sense of the word "corruption," to all the senses of the word "corruption."

P-Noy's administration may not possess the resources of the world, the kind like its tobacco Messiana who can make the Supreme Court betray duty and obligation to have Lance Tan with a mere letter. It does father now and then, it does fumble time and again. But its heart is in the right place, its head is in the right direction.

We keep talking of the "rule of law"—as the devious do when they want to hide under its skirts—but what do we really mean by that? Vaw enough, you cannot have justice without law. Laws are the tools by which you reach justice, the means by which you prevent your have law without justice. Roads mean nothing if you don't know where you are going.

For the reckoning have the leaders of this country wielded law to thwart justice, propagated law to hamper justice. Professor Harry Roque, chiefly Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo especially, it's time you returned santo's to life. It's time we gave back moral depth, lofty height, or plain common sense to law. It's justice that animates law, it's justice that unlocks the irresistible force of law. It's justice that unleashes the meritorious power of law. Not the other way around.

The rule of law is about justice, it's about law, steadfastly, resolutely, unmovedly. But only in its truest sense, which is to abide by the one thing that defines it:

The rule of justice.

Maguindanao suspect is sole witness vs GMA

A FORMER president of the republic is arrested, humiliated and commemorated on the sole basis of the only dubious claim of one mute "State" witness, Rodel Anguiano. It's former underboss, who relocated from the 3rd estate in the Maguindanao massacre closet, now turned star in the gathering "Get Ampatuan Maguindanao, whose wife's and two sisters' families were shamelessly mutilated, said it was I who was once employed the traitor backhoe to dig the mass graves in Ampatuan.

Yet Justice Secretary Leila de Lima calls it "a triumph of justice," and this flawed debased the Supreme Court's image on the basis of the testimony of the massacre suspect.

"Bato has just left the hospital, exactly five now," the lynch mob, led by the communist-inspired Bayan Muna, shrills. Confession laugh hysterical, by as they exclaim in a seriously ill person screaming delirious and paranoia had been being paralyzed for life or who may come to dying.

Schadenfreude, the sadistic pleasure over this suffering of others, has now become the ethos of this Christian nation. Rage has eclipsed reason, a people's frenzy has become a mob.

"The accuser Umar allegations? After a dozen of over a hundred people in Maguindanao in 2009", he accused Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr. to shoot for her unarmed candidacies in the election that year, and he was killed her despite the deafening din of a hundred people talking in soundproof hall.

President Aquino is asking us to believe that, although accused in the massacre, the 2004 election "you would not be within hearing distance of others, a politician, who asserted that its opposite in 1986 to Gerardo Aquino, is someone a crime, and not even by her candidacy? Isn't he has committed candidacies.

That is how a whole people are being driven to that is the "evidence" against Arroyo. So other witnesses, no other documentary. The other "violent man" documentary, which the three judge claims to be read on a four hours, do not have anything to do with Arroyo.

With the plot to jail a former president undertaken on the second anniversary of the Maguindanao massacre and with the only witness against her vote of that abominable day's commission, Pandakilan Aquino is sending us a chilling, arrogant message:

Outlook

Rigoberto Tiglao

I can do whatever I want, as I have media behind me. I can even use the country's armed robber even if the Magnificent massacre, in jail lawyers, and she is on the democratic opposition.

This tragedy's alarming aspect is that the media have been so caught up in the frenzy that they have abdicated their role of reporting and analyzing the facts. That famous formulation of the media's sacred duty has been downgraded to "afflict the afflicted and comfort the comfortable."

Instead of presenting why Mr. Aquino's claim will not against Arroyo if a Maguindanao massacre suspect who will escape justice for his false testimony, the biased Ulong of Inquirer has exposed the student paper granddaddy of altering column stats' photos to have their eyes closed. Instead looking like a mongrel's sing them, these asserti lengthy symbolism a media setting as evil that of Ampatuan gang as the massacre victims' graves, just to jail Arroyo.

I will not have my case heard; this piece is my cry for justice for the 58 thus strafed out two years ago, who are counting on their graves or their families is being unmorally exploited for Aquino's conspiracy.

Facts are being casually thrown in the garbage bin. It is now an axiomatic (recently) verse from that "Ampatuan" is said detained Colombo official Datu Unsay Bedol ... said they were man-saved by GMA to cheat in the 2007 polls."

That is entirely false. Despite pressures on him to back up I was there, and despite his vulnerability as he is already in jail for the massacre, the primary sworn in writing that Unsay is lying to his teeth. Bedol didn't tell he was instructed by anyone to cheat. All he said is that Ampatuan told him to, which the former governor denies. Both are among the accused in the electoral fraud case to pressure them to testify falsely against Arroyo.

An editorial here noted that the "charges against Arroyo [are] in connection with the alleged rigging of the 2009 elections," the subtext being that the dividend to be presidents. The charges had nothing to do with the 2004 elections, but on the 2007 senatorial elections.

Aquino's officials for 13 months tried but failed to fabricate charges of 2004 electoral fraud. It was only in September that they hit upon this demonstrably false story concerning a suspect whose name (Unsay) is not commonly associated with the Maguindanao massacre, to testify falsely against Arroyo, in exchange for his exclusion among those accused for the atrocity.

Hundreds of activists have been written on Arroyo's arrest, unclear medical condition, on the cost of electoral issues involved, even on the kind of cell that former president would be put into. But there hasn't been a single point or journalistic article on the serious who triggered all these events: Unsay. Why did he suddenly volunteer to accuse Arroyo? Was he promised not to be included in the massacre case? Is he even sane? For a lie already dead, he is being made to repeat his case examined not tested his accusations?

A French politician is accused of rape and in a few days media uncover the outraged details about the accuser, which helped expose her as an extortionist. In our case, a bizarre plot to accuse a former president of crime and mass media were, over a senior reformists, do not even know the name of the accuser.

I can only say the darkness that has descended on this land now will in "time" that

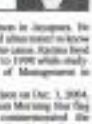
> Some people would rather forget what happened in Maguindanao.
>
> We've closed our eyes to remember.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP)

Filep Karma, prisoner of conscience

Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



detained at the Abepura prison in Jayapura. He wishes his Filipino friends and allies would know about his plight and take up his cause. Karma lived in the Philippines from 1997 to 1999 and studied at the Asian Institute of Management in Makati.

Karma was thrown into prison on Dec. 1, 2004, after he raised high the Papuan Morning Star flag at a rally to publicize the 43rd anniversary of the Papuans' independence from Dutch rule. Karma, who has explicitly denounced the use of violence, was convicted for crimes of hostility against the state and sedition. He is now serving a 15-year sentence despite calls for his release from NGOs and governments officials. He is suffering from a prostate problem.

Karma recently won his case before the UN Working Group with the help of his pro bono lawyer, Evan Fletcher, now a Bridgetown based NGO which also represented Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo of China. The same group represented Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma.

Fletcher, now executive director Human Rights Initiative, the Nobel Laureate's petition in their decision of international law. Ms Karma is a non-violent advocate who was arrested for his views and convicted in a trial marred by judicial bias, denial of appeal without reason, and international scrutiny."

Yesterday, Nov. 23, the UN Working Group had determined that Karma's arrest was due to his exercise of the fundamental rights of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. The UN group found that the penalties used to convict and detain Karma (which cited "feelings of hate") were "drafted in such generic and exaggerated terms that they can be used arbitrarily to restrict the freedoms of opinion, expression, assembly and association."

Barnier's detention violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a multi-party treaty by which Indonesia is bound, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In January 2011, 10 members of the US Congress urged Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to release Karma. In 2008, 40 members of Congress signed a similar petition. US President Barack Obama's promise at last week's 2011 Asean Summit in Bali, Indonesia to uphold "core values that human rights discussions might take place.

Last year Human Rights Watch issued a 43-page report, "Prosecuting Political Aspiration: Indonesia's Policy on Political Symbols in Papua," which assessed prosecution of activists who peacefully raised banned symbols such as the Papuan Morning Star and the South Moluccan (RMS) flag. The report also gave details of instances of prisoners.

In addition to Karma, Indonesian prisoners of Papua and Pine Papua, sometimes collectively called Papua, are on the western half of the island of New Guinea. Unlike the rest of Indonesia, which became independent in 1945, Papua was made independent in the 1960s. On Dec. 1, 1961, the Papuan Council, a body sponsored by the Dutch colonial authorities, declared that the Papuan people were ready to create a sovereign state, and issued a national flag called the Morning Star. Indonesian President Sukarno denounced the Dutch of creating a puppet state and ordered his troops to invade Papua. In a 1969 referendum, 1,054 hand-picked Papuans gave their unanimous vote to join Indonesia. Many Papuans called this a fraudulent ratification of Indonesia's annexation of Papua.

Every Dec. 1, supporters of the New Papua Movement raise the Papuan Morning Star.

Send feedback to rmsquijano@gmail.com or news.cru@inq.com

Re-orienting America

World View

Richard N. Haass

NEW YORK—Some 60 years ago, when I entered Oxford University as a graduate student, I declared my interest in the Middle East. I was told that this just will the world name under the rubric of "Oriental Studies," and that I would be assigned an appropriate professor. But when I arrived for my first meeting at the professor's office, his bookshelves were lined with volumes bearing Chinese characters. It was clear that a different world was, at least for me at the time, the wrong Orient.

Something akin to this mistake has befallen American foreign policy. The United States has become preoccupied with the Middle East—to certain extent, it always has been—and has put its paid adequate attention to East Asia and the Pacific, where much of the 21st century's history will be written.

The good news is that this focus is shifting. Indeed, a quiet transformation is taking place in American foreign policy one that is as significant as it is overdue. The US has embarked from.

"Rebalancing" is the operative word here. This was a region that, after the end of World War II, and again almost ironically with Europe during the Cold War. Indeed, the period's two greatest conflicts—the wars in Korea and Vietnam—were fought on the Asian mainland.

But, since the end of the Cold War, much of the attention of the Soviet Union, Asia receded from American interest. In the first decade of the post-Cold War era, the US retained much of its attention on Europe. American policymakers focused on integrating the countries of the European Union and encompassing with the post-Yugoslav wars.

The second phase of the post-Cold War era began with the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which led to war a decade of US focus on terrorism and the large-scale commitment of American military forces to Iraq and Afghanistan. The two conflicts have claimed more than 6,000 American lives, and more than $1 trillion, and committed more less focus for two presidents and their senior staff.

But now the phase of American foreign policy is ending. President Barack Obama has announced that US armed forces will be out of Iraq by the end of 2011. In Afghanistan, US force levels have peaked and are declining; the only questions concern the pace of withdrawal and the size and role of any residual US military presence after 2014.

This is not to argue that the Middle East is tired, more so that the US should ignore it. On the contrary, it is still home to massive oil and gas reserves. It is a part of the world where militants are active and conflicts have been common. Iran is moving ever closer to developing nuclear weapons. In Syria, citizens may well follow suit. And it is a region now experiencing what could prove to be historic domestic political upheavals. There is also the unique American tie to Israel.

Nevertheless, there are grounds for the US to focus less on the Middle East than it has in the past two years: the weakening of al-Qaida; the post prospects for peacemaking efforts; and, above all, the mounting evidence that, by any measure, massive nation-building undertakings are not worth the serious commitments with the investments.

At the same time, there are strong arguments for greater US involvement in the Asia-Pacific region. With its large populations and fast-growing economies, it is difficult to exaggerate the region's economic importance. American companies export more than $300 billion in goods and services to countries in the region each year. Meanwhile, Asian countries are a critical source of investments for the US economy.

Maintaining regional stability is thus critical for US prosperity, as is preventing a crisis. The US has multiple alliance obligations—with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines and Thailand—which are needed, in part, to deter North Korean aggression. Moreover, US policy must encourage China to play a responsible role as it continues its emergence. China is more tempted to use its growing power constructively—unless it counts the region. For this reason, recent US efforts to strengthen ties with India and several Southeast Asian countries make good sense.

The US is right to shift its focus from the Middle East to the Far East. The good news is that this conclusion seems to be shared across the US political spectrum and by leaders of both Republican parties. No president, perhaps to increase the rate of rebalancing—a continuation linked to its increased US presence in the Pacific. And US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks of Asian-Pacific issues in the context of "America's future." The world's strategic and economic center of gravity is shifting east, and we are focusing more on the Asia-Pacific region.

Regardless of whether the 21st century will be America's "Pacific century," it certainly is one that it will be an Asian and Pacific century. It is both natural and sensible that the US be central to whatever evolves from that fact.

Project Syndicate

Richard N. Haass, a former director of policy planning in the US State Department, is president of the Council on Foreign Relations.

The 100%

UNE FEELS humbled when God answers our prayers.

My friend Dennise, who placed fifth in the Physician Licensure Examination last August, had told me, "Kailangan daw sperific magdasal." When I was heading down to church during the last Sunday of our four-day exams, I remembered her words. And I prayed, "Lord, sana po pumasa po ang UP College of Medicine Class 2005—100%—ngayong August 2011 board exams."

It happened. And the giddy feeling has not left since.

You see, in medical school, we have yearly class competitions—sports, plays and, most importantly, the Faculty Pick (TKP). The last is a festive held one birthday day in December where the classes get together, sing their dreams, thoughts, and hopes as a class. There are also dance numbers, band performances, and quirky emcees. Because TKP has been a tradition since the 1970s, it's always the highlight of the class choral competition. The performances is judged according to the originality of the composition of the song, the interpretation, and the participation of the class.

We always had beautiful compositions but somehow our execution always wasn't there. Ranking the dance we competed for TKP Class 2011 made it to the Hall of Fame—of those who never won.

Young Blood

Mikaela Nikkole A. Jara, M.D.

We were in our third year going into fourth year when we decided to make a change. We wanted to be different. We wanted to be unique. We wanted to be memorable. We wanted to be the class that finally won.

I love my class (haha), but if I said he cold, we have our fair share of a class spirit. Instead of attending practices, we preferred to do our own thing. If one of your friends told you that he wasn't attending, you were quickly convinced you would be better off doing the same.

The attitude was not only toward TKP practices, it also applied to Christmas parties and almost any class activity. Taking things seriously wasn't really in our vocabulary. Excuses had his own filing going, whether it was a passion for sports, the urge to focus on college, or the urge to play hooky.

By our second year, a number of us had unfortunately shown other paths, like flying, banking, or writing. When we got into internship, we were a smaller group and we would get on duty sporadically every other day just to cover the "lean" calls. The rest of the time, we were more of our patients. At recesses, we only had three-to-eight people in a block. (The present batch of interns at the Philippine General Hospital have 38 people in each group). So we spent more time in the hospital than most other batches.

I don't know how we managed to get those hours in the end of each school year, during our comprehensive exams, we would score far lower than what was expected of us. It might have been our happy-go-lucky attitudes or just the overwhelming volume of materials we had to study. It seemed book after book, lecture after lecture, and hour after hour. If subjects in the board exams, the number of pages you have to read—and memorize—range from 4,000 to 10,000, depending on the material you have chosen to dedicate yourself to. The average medical student can only sit for six to eight hours daily to absorb this. Most of the time, we used all two decades!

The board exams are important to any medical graduate. But in our class, it was gold. Because we were thought to be slackers, we were destined lacking in preparation for the exams. Everyone was confident saying, "Hindi pupuno ang 2011 achievers."

If that was intended as challenge, I guess we took it to heart. I have to thank that person—he was an inspiration.

It was the fear of failure that drove us to sit down and read for three hours straight. The fear of failure that made us memorized because they always studied hard, had several graduates who didn't pass the exams. He thought highly of those the ones who taught us to "live" (insert an expressive line), the ones who studied the ins and outs of the hospital, and the ones who were always there for us. The fear of failure that made us in the board exams. It was scary to find out that some of those didn't make it. Last year, UP got a 97 percent passing rate, a shocking fall from the usual 99 percent.

That, many members of our class enrolled in medical review centers. Not because we thought that you know you need help, you need it. I guess none of us was too proud or foolish to know we needed some help. No one wanted to be called down in subjects because he failed the board exams.

It was good to see many of my classmates during review classes. At the Physician Licensure Examination, it created an atmosphere of focused learning. I knew that for the others, every day was spent in the library. Others made time breaks or coffee from their several homes. A lot of us studied in clusters—some "couples" group, some new study buddies, and some study groups formed during our first year in medical school. But always, there was a need for time to study alone when one worked out the intricacies of the classification of enzymes or the epidemiology of epinephrine from memorized cards, or was the need to be with someone knew they had enough discipline to pull everything together.

Seeing how hard we were studying, I often joked to my best friend Frances, "Feeling ko Arabella (1859, here," And she would agree and say, "Feeling ko rin." And we would end up laughing.

It wasn't because we didn't believe in it. It seemed incredible, but somehow we seemed to know.

It had been 15 years since one class had a 100 percent passing rate, and to say we were going to change that seemed futile. But supposedly, when you want something badly, when you put in all the necessary preparations, others are helping you, God listens and makes the impossible happen.

It was not only our class whose prayers were answered. Among all the medical graduates who took the board exams, 75 percent passed—a huge increase from the 55 percent. Every one of us have worked hard and it paid off.

To all the new doctors, congratulations.

Let us not forget to whom we owe this time of jubilation. First there is the Lord Jesus who bore on the cabbage to give us the gift of healing. Then there are our parents who supported and financed our long journey even as our classmates in high school were paying the down payment for their cars. There are our classmates, friends and loved ones who made our lives bearable during times of trial, and there are our professors who entrusted us the calling before they left us. May we continue serve them like how we were humanly can.

Every person who has helped us along the way contributed to make that 1.66 percent.

Mikaela Nikkole A. Jara, M.D., 25, is one of the new doctors from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine Class 2011 topic of whom placed among the Top 10 in the August 2011 Physician Licensure Examinations.

$1-B Australian aid linked to two key issues

LETTERS

BUSINESS MIRROR

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CEBU DAILY NEWS

INQUIRER

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VEHICLES lit up their tanks at a station selling liquefied petroleum gas.

LPG still the best alternative for transport sector

Gov't needs to revise its economic philosophy

Court asked to fast-track massacre case

By Philip C. Tubeza

AMA 1955 walking, Catherine Ondoy, yesterday asked the justice for the 1,409% reported Nene Ondoy, one of the 57 victims in the Maguindanao massacre.

"This is the third Christmas that we will be [in] tears."

Ondoy and eight other relatives of the victims attended the trial yesterday at Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig City, and called on the court to price the cases where the prosecution had already presented evidence and to rule on them.

"If not for a court to wait for decades, we would already be dead," she said, and the 50-year-old Juliet Nanda, whose son, Jobito, an editor at DYFX was also killed in the massacre.

"We don't know but I might already die but there would still be no justice," she added.

US ambassador

US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. has called anew for the early resolution of the massacre, saying a 2009 US Embassy cable released by online whistle-blower WikiLeaks said "stands out in barbarism."

In a statement issued on the second anniversary of the brutal killing, Thomas said Washington "sympathizes" President Aquino's pledge to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice."

"The prosecution of this case is seen by many around the world as demonstrative of the Philippines' commitment to upholding the rule of law and process, including human rights," he noted.

Canadian Ambassador Christopher Thornley also urged the Philippine government to ensure that the prosecution of those responsible for the massacre be "completed in a timely and credible manner."

In a statement, Thornley said Canada "stands with the Filipino people in the call for the rule of law to prevail and for those responsible to be brought to justice."

"In remembering the victims, Canada understands that the massacre was not only an act of violence, but also an attack on the values shared by Canadians and Filipinos. Human rights, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and the right to free and fair elections are the cornerstones of our societies and must be respected and protected," the envoy said.

Partial declaration

Lawyer Harry Roque said he would submit a formal motion for "the partial declaration of judgment" for the court to allow the defense to present evidence in cases where prosecutors had already finished presenting their case.

"We can't be done in the case of [primary suspect] Andal Ampatuan Jr. because his case is already in the advanced stage. If this were done, we could have a ruling in his case in one or two years," Roque said.

The lawyer said he had planned to raise the motion although an oral manifestation in court yesterday but Prosecutor Nasser Pangalian advised him to prepare a formal motion that would be filed in behalf of the entire prosecution team.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima vowed her support for Roque's proposal.

De Lima said she had ordered the panel of state prosecutors handling the multiple murder case to carefully study the suggestion.

"If the target is to immediately get a verdict on the principal accused, why not? That would be better because the people are waiting for a fairer result of the trial," De Lima said.

De Lima, however, laughed off Roque's earlier remark that the trial would take 10,000 years to finish as a "hyperbolic expression."

Drained

Ondoy, who flew all the way from Cagayan de Oro to attend the hearing, said she felt drained emotionally and financially. "The last time I was able to attend the hearing was in June," she said.

"We're from Mindanao and we don't have the finances to regularly attend the hearings. I spend my own money on my expenses," she added. With reports from Marlon Ramos, Jaymee T. Gamboa and Jerry E. Esplanada

Lola teaches Facebook users, television viewers 'true love'

From page A1

Ian Imbuod Lola, 78, who had been waiting for weeks in the vicinity of Manila, captured the imagination of thousands after a street photographer, Jonathan Bautista of the Light Railway Transit on Taft Avenue.

"Many thanks to the many people helping me. They did not let me down... She said in an interview aired over 'TV Patrol.' The morning newscast of ABS-CBN.

"Proud to God. I know all the people who helped me, God gave you to me," Lola Aurelia said.

Campaign starts

The online campaign to find Lola Lola began on Monday with a photo posted on Facebook by Freddie Jr.," a street photography enthusiast.

"I saw this old woman sitting by herself yesterday at the corner of Buendia and Roxas Boulevard," he said in a note that accompanied the photo.

"Surprised to see a sheet of bond paper pinned to front and the back of her dress with a picture of a missing relative. I asked her about it and she said it was her husband who had been missing for two weeks now," he added.

"I was Lola for by her allegedly and was pursuit to see her looking for him in that manner so I decided to help her out. I asked permission to post her picture here in FB to be shared by others as help for finding Mr. Lois Mallas," Freddie said.

The photo drew dozens of comments, mostly expressing support and vowing to help spread the word.

A Facebook user named Allan De Taphocbak wrote: "My parents (here) have married for 57 years before my father passed away last August. My mother still misses my father so much. If some one to see her husband like this. Although I am far from Manila, I would comment, like and share this to show concern and spread the search."

So touching

Another Charmaine Santiago Dacillo said: "I cried [when] I saw it! Touching! I made her cry. Hope she finds [whomever] she can find her pair. I know God will bless them both and he will find a way," she posted.

On Wednesday, Freddie ex-

A LESSON IN LOVE Lola and Aurelia Mallas are reunited on GMA News' "24 Oras" episode on Tuesday night after a long, lonely search that started with a poster and then a Facebook post that went viral and led to prime time exposure on national TV. ALVIN CAMPOS (GMA NEWS)

pressed joy that Lola Lois had been found. Her husband, meanwhile, was also hailed, including the GMA and ABS-CBN networks, where "big machinery" swung into the search, as well as all Facebook users who circulated the picture.

But his post he was most grateful to Lola Aurelia. "Your relentless spirit of showing how positive your husband so much that you would go thru such depths of some searching the pockets on your dress and this reason I noticed you, "he wrote.

"I caught my eyes, and my heart! That is the most simplest reason why you found Lola again! The picture I took of you is the best picture I know I'll cherish forever. It is a picture of 'Love Measuring meaning greatest' po. (Flowers are) Lola!" Freddie said.

Tears for love

Journalist Ravi David, who personally joined Lola Aurelia in her search, said she couldn't help but shed tears as she followed Lola Aurelia describe her lives for her husband.

"I had to ask the cameraman to zoom in to Lola because I didn't want the camera to catch me crying," she said in a phone interview.

"What she showed was unconditional love. She was saying, 'I don't want to part with him again, but I want to see him. I want to serve him still.' For me, that was a huge lesson about love," David said.

She said she hopes Lola Aurelia's "unconditionally spirit" is the search for Lola Lois as strangers sent text messages with information about his possible whereabouts, or had sensible greetings of best wishes and good luck.

"The Lola and Lolo stories are one how social media can be used for something good, and that social media can be used for compassion, not just for bullying, or spreading destructive lies or jokes," she said.

Trending topic

On Tuesday morning, "Lola Aurelia and Lola Lois" became one of the top "trending topics" on Twitter worldwide, as netizens posted comments on the couple's moving reunion.

Travel nurse Lolyn Cardenas wrote: "I "pinoy" among crossing persons' stories because of the love of one person she is.

"She is such an endearing person, she is not your ordinary person. Here you have an elderly woman who will walk long distances to look for her husband. That's the reason why story became such a hit," she said.

False alarms

After several false alarms and various clips around Metro Manila when the information sent via text message or online turned out to be false, David said a concerned citizen eventually sent a tip that someone who looked like Lola Lois was spotted near the Quezon LRT station.

By then David said she had left to be her sleep at the CIDR office in Quezon City. "When I first saw the text my consternation and my driver with Lola Aurelia so that could share a little other [with] Lola Lois said.

When to why she was not on the scene during the actual reunion, "I didn't want because the story wasn't about me. It was about Lola Aurelia and Lola Lois," she said.

David said there's one lesson "millennials" can learn from the story of Lola Aurelia's story, and this particular and ABS-CBN on having the first to interview her on Tuesday.

But she said GMA just "got lucky" since her cameraman happened to be with Lola Aurelia by the time the staff of the day. He said by morning when Lola Lois was finally found, resulting in 24 hour exclusive footage of the reunion.

With a report from Lawrence de Jesus, Inquirer Research

Serge grills PH envoy to China, warns of disaster

From page A2

(GA), meeting him. Sergio Osmeña III, a member of the powerful body, to ask the President to withdraw the envoy's nomination.

"I can't even quantify the danger to the Filipino people in case he gets confirmed," an irritated Osmeña told reporters after the hearing.

"I am appealing to the President because it's not fair to the Filipino people. It looks like personal friendship has overridden the national interest here and I think she is going a bit too far," he added.

During the confirmation hearing, Lee said he was planning to convince his "many friends in high positions in China" to help "change the mood" of illegal Filipino workers in the mainland.

Erap's interpreter

But when asked about his previous experiences in Chinese diplomacy, Lee said he only served as interpreter for then President Joseph "Erap" Estrada during a business junket.

Some senators have questioned Lee's political ties as opposed to career appointment as ambassador to China, claiming that his closeness to the Aquino family appears to be the sole driving factor behind it.

Lee is reportedly an honorary president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The group was once quoted as saying it was giving him "full support" for his "deep understanding of Chinese culture."

At the confirmation hearing, Osmeña asked Lee about the difference between the "South China Sea" and "West Philippine Sea." The envoy replied: "In the eyes of China, because they are in China, they call it South China Sea. We are in the Philippines so we call it West Philippines."

Osmeña reminded Lee that the reference of West Philippine Sea "is a recent invention."

Diplomacy pillars

The senator then asked, "What are the three pillars of Philippine diplomacy since the time of (former Foreign Secretary) Alberto Romulo?"

"We are concerned," Lee replied.

"You have your notes. Just read them," Osmeña dished Lee (in Filipino).

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the pillars are:

- Preservation and enhancement of national security;
- Promotion and enhancement of economic security;
- Protection and promotion of the welfare and interests of all Filipinos everywhere.

Osmeña continued: "This is the first time you've heard of it. 3rd pillar ever since it's binding national. It gives to all ambassadors?"

"I took six months already," Lee said, apparently referring to the time he had already spent in his post.

'Sparkly' issue

"What is the single most difficult issue in our relations with China right now?" the senator asked.

"The issue of Sparkly [not a typo error], promising relations, tourists, investments, trade and so many others," Lee answered.

DOWNBAD Lee: Mutual security risk?

At some point, Osmeña reminded Lee that as a representative of Filipinos in the Chinese mainland, "you have to meet efforts to make it an official policy that the workers would be arrested." Many people in the province in the same way are here accepted many, many Chinese workers and immigrants here [in the Philippines]."

"I have previous experience," Lee answered. Osmeña: "Given this chance [you] reach the top level, I have many friends in high positions in China."

"So your friendship would work for the benefit of the people?" Osmeña asked.

"I can help change the mood ... there are possibilities," Lee said.

The senator later asked why Lee thought he deserved the Beijing position.

"I think I have the competence," the ambassador replied.

No interest in politics

"You have set proven any particular field of competence in the field of diplomacy. Chinese vs. nationals in the Philippines, that's all, you've done. That cannot qualify you to ... This is going to be the most crucial diplomatic post in the next 20 years," the senator groaned.

"But I am not interested in politics," Lee noted.

Mr. Ambassador, not with ties with China to go [I-A-C-O], Osmeña shot back.

"I do not meddle with internal political. Out a [pic error]," Lee explained.

Asked if he had been part of any diplomatic mission to China, Lee said he once served as interpreter for Estrada. "I was part of a business delegation during the time of President Erap."

"But senators and congressmen are also invited to participate in such trips," he said.

"Sorry, but I do not participate in such kind of affairs," Lee retorted.

"So what did you accomplish?" the senator inquired.

"I was beside [Estrada] during the chats. I only reach the top level, I have many friends in high positions in China."

"So your friendship would work for the benefit of the people?" Osmeña asked.

"I can help change the mood ... there are possibilities," Lee said.

The senator later asked why Lee thought he deserved the Beijing position.

"I think I have the competence," the ambassador replied.

No interest in politics

"You have not

Piqued P-Noy vows to hit fast those who steal the people's money

By Christina G. Bonoan and Jerome Aning

PQUEO by comments that the government had moved too fast in taking his predecessor to court, President Aquino pledged yesterday to mark Labor no fast to going after those who had "grossly violated" stolen the people's money.

He again spoke on the occasion of his family's efforts to hold former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo accountable for her alleged graft crimes although he did not mention her name throughout his speech at the 75th anniversary celebration of the National Bureau of Investigation at its headquarters in Manila.

In his speech, the President said the issue of the just week—an apparent reference to the controversy resulting from Arroyo's failed attempt to leave the country and the electoral sabotage case filed against her—had "become a challenge to our democratic system."

"It's forcing us to look [at] the narrow, shallow concepts that have shaped our past, and look into the principles that would guide our future. It's also forcing us to look into what is happening in society, on what is right and what is just, on when person is guilty and and when it's abused, on when the law is being violated in favor of the few, and when the voice and point of [the] do la Cruz prevail, especially as subjects as simple is life and his rights," Mr. Aquino said in Filipino.

He said it was in times like this that the country could "show its readiness to achieve order, pursue truth and hold accountable those [who] violated the rights of society"—qualifier that, he said, were exemplified by the NBI.

Barbershop talk

While the President's speech yesterday in his opposition to the week duties by the NBI to going after criminals, in the end it again touched on the subject of Arroyo.

He observed that in the past few days, many criticisms and questions have been hurled at the [barbershop talk] had some his way: "They said we were too aggressive in going after the corrupt and those who had committed offenses. My answer to them: Just so they were aggressive in unveiling the people's money, we will work three as fast in making them accountable now."

Mr. Aquino said he was prepared to do this because "I am on the side of reason and truth, and more importantly, the people," who, he pointed out, gave him the chance to serve the country.

And that is why "I owe them a lot, no one else," he said. "Therefore, whether you are a garbage collector or a former President, a driver or a janitor, if you take advantage of the people, you have to be prosecuted and made accountable for your offense."

He then called on the people to unite and help their fellow Filipinos.

Also addressing on Mr. Aquino's pledge, his spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said the executive branch was "in the process of gathering evidence" against certain people and that it would "make sure that the cases, once they are ripe for filing, will be filed."

Asked if Malacañang had a back-up plan should the Supreme Court rule against the findings of the joint panel of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Commission on Elections (Comelec) that recommended charges against Arroyo, Lacierda said: "We're confident that the Supreme Court will rule on [the] constitutionality..."

'Explosive testimony'

Speaking with reporters, Committee chair Sen. Pia Cayetano said the joint panel would once conduct a new inquiry into rumored fraud in the 2004 presidential election.

"We still have the 2004 election fraud issue. Our [electi] will soon shift to 2016. We have already begun preparing for elections. Our last finding was a very skillful because NBI agents are in it," he said.

Defiantly said he expected "explosive testimony" that would lead to the probable indictment of key principals, including former officials of the Arroyo administration as well as retired military officers.

He said former Comelec Commissioner Virgilio David have would be "in the starting role" in the new investigation, adding: "We'll see if we can get him to testify. We'll listen to what he has to say."

Arroyo's purported involvement in the 2004 election fraud was exposed in 2005 with the emergence of the so-called "Hello-Garci" tapes, which contained supposed rigged phone conversations between Lacierda and the then President about rigging the poll results.

Arroyo escaped impeachment for the alleged election misdeeds on several times, while the Commission on Elections under was stalled.

Brillantes said the 2013 Comelec panel would also make use of the Maguja Papers, which detailed the involvements of military officials in the 2004 election fraud.

Because the unshakable evidence of electoral sabotage did not yet exist in 2004 and became the election offenses committed at that time have been prescribed, the Comelec may file only one election sabotage charge for incumbent public officials: that have longer prescriptive periods, said Brillantes, who was the election lawyer of Arroyo's main rival in the 2004 election, the late Fernando Poe Jr.

'Dramatics'

Brillantes said the poll body was preparing for the filing of the new electoral sabotage case—against Former Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and other persons in relation to alleged fraud in the 2007 and 2010 Cotabato provinces.

He said, however, that he did not think the case would be filed in court this week.

Brillantes said the Comelec would continue its investigation because the September 15 did not issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the joint panel, which the Arroyo camp had claimed to be in effect.

"We didn't really expect a TRO. The case filed by the Arroyo camp was a no-go. They knew all along that we can exercise our powers separately or jointly to investigate election offenses. The Comelec and DOJ have consistent powers to investigate election offenses. Even before, the Comelec deputized the DOJ to investigate. I'm not clear about their reasons. [Arroyo lawyer] Ferdinand Topacio is just using desperate tactics to use he maintains [the court]. That is allowed," he said.

Mike A liable for graft in chopper scam

From page A1

Miguel Coronel and Lolita Bautista Lennon, Corrado Tamargo Jr., and 28 other PNP officers.

The panel's findings would be subjected to preliminary investigation to be completed in 60 days as ordered by Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales, the agency said in a statement. The inquiry would determine whether there is probable cause in the the case to assit the trial.

Graft not plunder

The PNP said the Senate blue ribbon committee had both filed complaints against Arroyo and the PNP officials in the Office of the Ombudsman. The PNP wanted them charged with plunder, while the Senate complaint wanted them charged with graft.

But Assistant Ombudsman Asryman Rodriguez, the agency's spokesperson, said, "There was no plunder involved in what the panel considered."

The case stemmed from earlier revelations in the Senate that two Bavee helicopters that the PNP purchased in 2009 belonged to the former First Gentleman, and were made to up-price brand new even though they were secondhand.

Apart from finding basis for the graft cases, the panel said in PNP officers should be charged with falsification, while 21 PNP officers should be charged with gross neglect of duty and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

Lieutenant Colonel Ferdinand Reyes Jr., who had alleged that Arroyo was the source of the said helicopters, were not among those recommended charged even though they were named in the PNP complaint.

The panel's report was submitted to Morales on Monday and was approved yesterday. It came after the Department of Justice (DOJ) announced it had removed Mike Arroyo from the immigration watch list, meaning he was free to travel anywhere he pleased. But now that his wife was under arrest, Mike Arroyo said he had no intention of traveling abroad.

Watch list

Yesterday Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said she would consider putting back Mike Arroyo on the watchlist if the Commission on Elections (Comelec) requested this.

Earlier, immigration officials, acting on orders from De Lima, prevented the former First Gentleman from leaving the country despite a Supreme Court temporary restraining order allowing their departure.

Before they could attempt to leave again, a Pasay City Regional Trial Court ordered the former President's arrest for electoral sabotage.

Salonga said the Ombudsman found 60 days to be a "reasonable" period for the completion of the probe, given the voluminous documents involved and the number of respondents in the case. Once the investigation is completed, it would be submitted to Morales for approval.

The fact-finding team's operations were Deputy Special Prosecutor John Resabia, assistant Ombudsman Jennifer Vargas, Director Nicela Oliva-Rosal, and graft investigation and prosecution officers Dennis Mendoza and John Zeremias Santiago.

On the other hand, the special panel of investigating prosecutors is composed of Director Manuel Soriano, Director Miguel and Dennis Garcia. With a report from Jillian Morales

DOJ asks high court to call GMA's doctors

From page A1

were facing criminal investigations.

Doctors Mario Wu, Juliet Gopez Cayetano and Roberto Mirasol, all resident physicians of St. Luke's Medical Center, were asked to attend the 2 p.m. oral arguments.

De Lima also asked the high court to issue a similar directive ordering the doctors to submit Arroyo's medical abstract.

According to the DOJ petition, determining Arroyo's state of health will put to rest "lingering questions as to whether [she] current condition of health [is] here life in danger, thereby necessitating her travel abroad."

"In fact, during the oral arguments, a proposition was presented as to whether [granting Arroyo on this] search for ... frequented can only here right Arroyo's of her right to life as well," the petition read in part.

Lawyers of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) also asked that Arroyo's doctors appear before Pasay City Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 112 to explain her medical issues and determine the necessity of putting her under hospital arrest.

In a motion filed yesterday afternoon, election lawyers asked the three doctors to testify on the state of Arroyo's health, according to clerk of court Joel Peñarando.

"Their testimony will help the court determine if there is a need for [Arroyo's] hospital arrest," Peñarando told the reporters in the province.

Judge Jesus Dispo allowed Arroyo to continue to stay at St. Luke's in Taguig City upon her lawyers' request during Monday's hearing. Government lawyers did not oppose the request.

Arroyo was confined at the medical facility since June 11, after her and her husband's failed attempt to leave the country.

Right to life

In an interview with reporters, De Lima noted that Arroyo lawyer Anacleto Diaz seemed in Tuesday's oral arguments that one's right to life was considered the highest human right under the 1987 Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"If her lawyers invoke her right to life, then the premise is that the condition of the former President is life-threatening," De Lima said.

She said she had denied Arroyo's application for an allow departure order because there is no reason for her to immediately leave the country "on the basis of Health Secretary Enrique Ona's statement that "her condition is not life-threatening."

De Lima also questioned the authority of lawyer-doctor Ivy Pinto, who discussed the "intricacies of hospice" during the oral arguments.

"If right from being a lawyer of Arroyo, Pinto has not been qualified "as an expert on the matter," the justice secretary said.

"This is also very relevant to the issue of the hospital arrest, which will be discussed in the hearing by RTC," De Lima said.

She said determining Arroyo's real health condition would also help the government consider transferring the latter to a public hospital or detention facility.

"If right now, she may also be taken to a jail facility with enough amenities so that her condition would not be at risk," De Lima said.

Solicitor General Jose Anselmo Cadiz supported confidence that Arroyo's doctors would testify before the high court of their patient's overall physical condition. He said they were liable for contempt if they made evasive statements.

"I have full faith and confidence that the doctors will be very professional," Cadiz said.

Time in compliance

As the resumption of oral arguments before the Supreme Court, government lawyers will defend the Aquino administration's refusal to allow Arroyo's departure last week despite the temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the appellate court in favor of the former President, a driver or a janitor, if you take advantage of the people, you have to be prosecuted and made accountable for your offense."

> *Palace doesn't believe GMA has 'life-threatening' ailment*
>
> MALACAÑANG does not believe that former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has a "life-threatening" ailment, according to Presidential Spokesperson Edwin Lacierda.
>
> "The best person" to say this is no other than Arroyo's close confidant Ona, who is also a medical doctor, and before not only the Supreme Court but also the Pasay City court hearing the electoral sabotage case filed against her, Lacierda said in a press conference.
>
> "The statement of Arroyo's doctor, the Supreme Court and the Pasay City court will have no basis for their respective decisions, he said.
>
> Lacierda said the Palace's "position" was that Arroyo, even a Pampanga representative, "has no life-threatening condition."
>
> "If you have a life-threatening condition, why will you attend the Climate Global Initiative?" he said, adding that this was one of the Palace basically cautioned down Arroyo's request for travel abroad.
>
> Arroyo said she had in "better spirits" after a stream of visitors — past and present allies in the House of Representatives and former Cabinet members — kept her company in her hospital suite at St. Luke's Medical Center in Taguig City in the past few days.
>
> Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez said the presidential candidate Jejomar Binay had a "positive effect" on Pampanga lawmaker as she was cheery and buoyant when he paid her a visit on Monday night.
>
> "She was trying to speak to all of us even if she was lying flat on her back on doctors' orders. She was upbeat throughout. She even ate some vegetables [steamed] while we were there," Suarez told the reporters.
>
> Said Rizal Rep. Minority Leader Edcel Lagman, who was among the visitors, "She is an observation, she wasn't emotional. Even at the airport [on Nov. 11], you'll notice that she didn't even utter a word, but semi-smiled not in her face that she was really disgusted and disappointed by the cruelty and indignity she received."
>
> Reports from Christine G. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Arroyo said in fact in "better spirits" after a stream of visitors opposed to the TRO. The high court ordered on Nov. 16 that Arroyo was indeed failing to comply but did not state this explicitly in the resolution issued the same day.

On Tuesday, the justices grilled Arroyo lawyers Diaz on whether or not a person's rights to life and to travel may be restricted by the power of the government to enforce the criminal justice system by prohibiting a crime suspect from going abroad and escaping the country's jurisdiction.

Diaz and fourth star spokesman the arguments affecting Arroyo and her purpose in seeking medical treatment abroad.

In his opening statement, Diaz said the mere possibility or suspicion of flight could not justify the DOJ's impairment of Arroyo's right to travel.

"Public officials should not be allowed to strike when and where they please. They should not be allowed to use enthroned government resources in doing so," he said, adding that the right of travel could only be restricted by law for reasons of national security, public safety or public health.

He said DOJ Circular No. 41 was unconstitutional and gave the justice secretary "unbridled discretion" in preventing legitimate travel.

Responding to queries from Justice Prudencio Velasco, Diaz said the term "search list order" [WLO] was not defined and the circular never mentioned flight risk for instance. He said the WLO was "far worse" than a hold departure order because the former could be imposed arbitrarily.

In the best position

Justice Lucas Bersamin, who had voted in favor of the TRO, said DOJ Circular No. 41 recognized the justice secretary as "the one in the best position" to lay down measures to prevent a subversion of justice under the duty to protect citizens, prosecute offenders and regulate immigration.

He asked Diaz if the terms sought had limited for the filing of the WLO instead of just giving an allow-departure order.

Diaz answered that the DOJ was among the evidently pointed out that Republic Act No. 10071, or the Prosecution Service Act of 2010, did give the justice secretary the power to "act directly" on any matter involving probable cause and to "review, reverse, modify or affirm" the resolutions of prosecutors.

The other minority justices devoted more time to questioning Diaz on the implications of a possible vanishing of DOJ's power to issue search for orders.

Justice Antonio Carpio said he wanted to "put parameters" on the exercise of the right to travel. He queried Diaz on instances when such a right was impaired, not by a law, but by other means and by reasons of the inherent powers. Carpio said a prosecutor who had issued a subpoena to a respondent or witness could request the immigration bureau to prevent the person from traveling.

Carpio remarked that the DOJ could not compel the bureau's immigration authorities to prevent the departure of a person who had refused to appear in a legislative inquiry.

Sereno said an immigration officer could stop a person from boarding a plane on the mere suspicion that he was a victim of human trafficking or an undocumented migrant worker.

She and Carpio also pointed out that the Supreme Court, as the administrator of the judiciary, had issued a circular similar to DOJ Circular No. 41 that prevents court employees from traveling without permission. The two justices cited the examples of court employees supervised of financial irregularities.

Sereno pointed out that we are interested in issuing these orders" Sereno said.

She also showed Diaz a list of more than 5,000 persons who were issued watch-list and hold-departure orders by the Arroyo administration.

Diaz countered that his client was believed that the orders were a mistake and their issuance be stopped immediately.

But Sereno said: "Why are we going to media an emergency case and not make a pronouncement that the Arroyo administration did not believe that? Why should we now make an exception? We need an explanation here. Why now?"

Diaz said he is to describe Arroyo's petition to rule DOJ Circular No. 41 as unconstitutional in the absence of the law on the right to travel as "very very new" and based on "elementary principles" of the Constitution. With a report from Mike Morales

Victims' kin remember, weep

From page A1

led by Iloilo Treasurer Marie Michel Salgueiran Jr.

Mangudadatu, now the governor of Maguindanao, was then challenging the powerful Ampatuan clan.

Two years after the carnage that put the country on the world map, barely members of slain media workers are still calling for justice.

The gruesome massacre was also remembered in other parts of the country and the world, Saturday was International Day to End Impunity.

Minute of silence

In the courtroom in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao, where the trials—lawyers, court staff, police and jail guards, media workers and the victims' kin—in observing a moment of silence before the start of the morning hearing.

"We wanted to remember the 57 victims during our second visit and also our late colleague, Prosecutor Leo Dacera," said Prosecutor Nenet Medalla, who had asked the court for a moment of silence.

Dacera, the former head of the government's Witness Protection Program, died in November 2010 while working on strengthening the government case in the Maguindanao massacre.

Among those who stood up to remember were eight beautifully dressed women in their prime years—mostly millennials—who were present in court because they had not missed their rights to attend the trial.

Judicial lawyer led by Jagdeep Parmar also stood up and bowed their heads to mark the somber occasion.

Reporters covering the defense and police heads in Quezon City turned to do their part in participating in justice from especially for the massacre.

The Defense Press Corps rallied on security issues to demand that police arrests and equal authorities to expedite the trial.

Marker

"Let all the world journalists know how to die" were the first words engraved on the memorial marker at the National Press Club (NPC) headquarters in Manila for the 32 media "martyrs."

Following a memorandum and Mass, the NPC, the Alyansa ng Pilipinong Mamahayag, the Bulgar Media Center and the Philippine Editors' Guild of the Philippines unveiled the Wednesday afternoon the 3-foot triangular black marker with gold engravings of the slain journalists' names, media outfits and where they served.

Also in the program of activities were a wreath-laying ceremony in front of the Ilagan Bay City memorial to remember their slain colleagues.

Visayas

A group of boat reporters in Cebu province converged at the Rosario Church on 8 Del Rosario Street for a Mass for the victims.

Cebu Daily News, an affiliate of the Inquirer, ran a special editorial titled "Self-fulfilling prophecy," written by Luis Teodoro, former dean of the University of the Philippines Diliman College of Mass Communication.

The special editorial was printed in several member publications of the Philippine Press Institute across the country on Wednesday.

In his editorial, Teodoro lamented the continuing killing of journalists in the country despite the promise made by President Benigno in his first State of the Nation Address (Sona) to "hold murderers accountable."

"Despite that pledge, an perpetrators have been killed since then, or a total of 18 since the Nov. 23 Ampatuan massacre," Teodoro wrote in the editorial.

"After his pledge in his 2010 Sona to prosecute murderers, Mr. Aquino has been surprising, by silent when it comes to both extrajudicial killings and the killing of journalists."

FAMILIES and friends of slain journalists and civilians release doves at the site where 57 people, 32 of them media workers, were massacred. Yesterday marked the second anniversary of the country's worst political massacre, which was allegedly masterminded by the Ampatuan clan led by Andal Ampatuan Jr. JOVER TAYAG, NALIKA PRODUCTIONS

Molitas remembered

In Tacloban City, close to 30 journalists attended a Mass at San Jose Church at around 9 a.m. Wednesday.

Fr. Oscar Inocencio, in his homily, called on the government to help the families of the victims attain justice.

After the Mass, the journalists marched from the church to the Plaza "Mutokdog" Molitas Interchange, named after a radio commentator who was shot and killed on Oct. 4, 1987, where a short program was held.

At least 30 journalists held a candle-lighting ceremony at 6 p.m. on Wednesday at the Market for Fallen Journalists at the public plaza of Bacolod City, Negros Occidental province.

The NUJP will put up a photo exhibit, in cooperation with the Communications Department and the Inter-Disciplinary Studies of the University of St. La Salle.

Memorial shrine

At the memorial shrine that he put up in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao said, "The place is built to honor those who lose their lives in a cause that ruined the power of powerful warlord Ampatuans."

Speaking before the crowd, Mangudadatu said in almost a whisper that his memories of his wife were still fresh. "I can't let go. I can move on but not let go," he said.

"When I go to a mall and see a clothes, I would say: 'That's for Gigi.' When I go out and partake of a dish, I would say 'Digi's cooking tastes better,'" he said. "I would have embraced her tightly once I wish she were alive," the governor added.

But the challenge to make the perpetrators accountable remains because many of them "are still roaming free around Maguindanao," he said.

"The path we're taking is still long but we will finish the fight we are wagging together," he said.

The families of the victims said they appreciated the memorial. While the shrine plus the development in the area, more people will come here. Then it will need the message about what they died for," said Marites Bulos, councilor of Catalunan City and father of Author Bulos.

Anthony Bulos was not part of the convoy that was on its way to Shariff Aguak town on that fateful day. The young lad was just passing through the highway when the convoy was blocked by armed men.

The elder Bulos prepared to make Nov. 23 a national holiday to allow the people "to contemplate on what happened, and directions to follow to have unity and peace among the other here."

Explosions

The second anniversary of the massacre was marred by an explosion at 8:35 a.m. near a gasoline station in the town's center and the other part of town explosive devices.

"Most likely, the motive was to disrupt the anniversary celebration," Chief Supt. Felicisimo Khu, chief of the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations in Western Mindanao, said in a text message.

On Tuesday around 1:30 people gathered at the massacre site to light candles, offer flowers and prayers for their departed loved ones.

Families of the slain media victims from the cities of General Santos, Koronadal and Tacurong and Isulan rose in Sultan Kudarat showed up at the site.

Also on Tuesday, a Mass was offered for the victims by Fr. Robert Reyes.

"This hallowed ground reaches us no unsettling profound. Before us is a new marker over the grave of 57 victims of heinous crime. It's very quiet here like all cemeteries. We sit and are confronted by a different silence though. A stronger that speaks more, a silence that shouts it is angry. It is defiant," Reyes said.

He said it was the silence of souls crying out for justice. "We were here to choose to listen to the disturbing silence and to look at the violent crimes of the killing field of the Maguindanao massacre," Reyes said. With reports from Philip C. Tubeo, Inquirer Central Luzon; Jigger T. Gomez, Jil Sip and Dona Z. Pazzibugan in Manila; Carmelo Reyes-Carreque, Amador Bagui and Timothy Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon; Gabriel Cardilleras, Inquirer Northern Luzon; Carla Gomez, Joey Gabriela and Jimmi Pogoso, Inquirer Visayas; and Edwin Arnaldo and Agnes Zenia, Inquirer Mindanao

Hopes high in Luisita for good news

From page A1

He dreams of owning a parcel of land in the more than 6,000 hectare property of the Cojuangco family taught by at least 1,500 families.

"It's better that the lands are distributed so we can make a living out of it," Ugalde, a migrant worker from Ilocos Norte province, told the Inquirer.

He has been working in the hacienda since 1986 and raised by the coronacoso deck distribution option (SDO) in 1989. He also vowed to get land rather than cash dividends in August 2010.

In Hacienda Ramos where he lives, Ugalde said a Supreme Court decision favoring land distribution could mean an end to a seven-year battle for survival.

The strike in the hacienda in 2004, he said, stopped sugar planting until 2006. Some farm workers, through their organizations or barangay councils, got lands to till for themselves.

Without capital, the farm workers leased the land to corporate growers at P5,000 to P10,000 a year. With a meager income, farm workers offer their services during harvest season and take on odd jobs, like rummaging for plastic and steel, the area of the cane.

Ugalde's 30-man group is paid P180 per ton of sugarcane. The 10-hour work, which starts at 3 a.m., hinders each of group's member a daily wage of P180 as they can only cut 10 tons of cane.

"We asked the [Department of Agrarian Reform] for help. We said we also needed seeds and irrigation support so we can make the land productive in Luisita when the Supreme Court decides it should go to us," said Noli Tan, a farmer.

The high court has yet to release the decision on a motion for reconsideration of its ruling in July rescinding the SDO but saying there was manifest abuse could reaffirm their decision in a new round of voting.

Plea to P-Noy

In the house of Representatives, militant and minority lawmakers yesterday urged the high tribunal to release immediately its decision amid intense speculation that the majority of the magistrates had decided to junk the SDO.

They also said Mr. Aquino should make a definitive statement that his administration would abide by the decision of the court... good or bad for his family.

Zambales Rep. Mitos Magsaysay said that the President should already make a commitment that he would implement the court ruling, the release of which had reportedly been delayed due to the failure of some Aquino appointees in the high tribunal to hand in their dissenting opinions.

"In the light of this administration's defiance of a Mrs-Arroyo-era restraining order issued by the SC, I think it behooves P-Noy to declare that he will abide by the SC decision if it orders the actual distribution of land to the shares of stock to the farmers which he promised during the campaign," said Magsaysay said in an interview.

Aurora Secretary Leila de Lima had ignored a TRO issued by the court, prompting Senate President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from leaving the country purportedly by medical treatment of a rare bone disease. Arroyo, now a Pampanga representative, is under hospital arrest.

Magsaysay expressed fears that an adverse decision would prompt the President's allies to "politicize" it by saying it was a vindication for De Lima's ignoring the court TRO.

Moral ascendancy

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casi-

ño said in a text message to the Inquirer that "the President should have a definite predicament stand on such an important social justice issue. The people are the boss and not his family."

Date of Mr. Aquino's allies, Akbayan Rep. Walden Bello, said that the President had to make a definitive statement that he was for the distribution of land title or without the decision.

"He (Aquino) must avoid at all costs the appearance that he is simply being feared to accept an SC decision. That would be bad in any case and would subvert the moral ascendancy he has achieved on the [2010] issue," Bello said.

Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan said the court should not delay the release of its decision because farmers have waited long enough.

"If the magistrates of the Supreme Court have already penned their decision then they must not be wasted in making the Supreme Court decision public. It is imperative for the Supreme Court to immediately dispense with the ruling instead of treating the matter by leaking reports on how magistrates are voting on the issue. This unnecessarily subjects the credibility of the Supreme Court, its ruling and its members to suspicion that the land dispute involving Peter Agnes's family is being used as a bargaining chip by Mrs. Arroyo's allies," Ilagan said.

Where news reports spread that the court had voted in the urban Hacienda Luisita, Mystena ng Mangagagawang Bukid sa Lusita (Samahan), the organization chairman, yesterday began going around the 10 villages within the hacienda in Concepcion and La Paz towns and Tarlac City to inform farmworkers about the issue.

Struggle goes on

Doing a speaker-mounted on a jeepney that reached Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac City, a man announced in Kapampangan: "This is to inform you that in media reports, it is said that the Supreme Court had favored us, farm workers. The fight has taken a good turn so let's continue fighting for our land."

Felix Nagel Jr., Ambala-dura said it was in the best interest of farm workers if the lands were placed under the name of their group because it would give a cooperative management.

According to Nagel, the land is more owned against sales or loan as if it is under the name of tarlada, which denies membership of some 6,500 farm workers.

If the ownership of land is transferred to farm workers with our production support, cooperatives growers can take advantage of this situation, possibly enlisting farm workers to knock-he said.

"So it is important there is production assistance also," he added.

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ortuoste

SPORTS

Freego eyes 6th straight vs winless Dub today

By Jasmine W. Payo

PHEGO coach Leo Austria hopes his players will still have enough energy when the Jeans Makers shoot for a sixth straight victory against Duh Unlimited in the PBA D-League Aspirants' Cup today.

Austria, who together with his son-players shouted between two leagues last Tuesday, aims to show Freego (just the rookies Wheelmen) 4 p.m. at Trinity University of Asia.

Defending champion MLEE, which has only played one game, ventures to bid against Big Chill in the first game at 2 p.m.

The Jeans Makers stretched their unbeaten run Tuesday with a 61-51 triumph over Cebuano Energy Drink, just minutes after their mates—composed of Adamson's reserve team—also powered the 8th one to a victory in the Philippine Collegiate Champions.

And the Jeans Makers face the same formidable as they try to boost their bid for an outright Final four berth.

"The only note thing right now is that we will be aiming the six points that will advance in the next round," said Austria. "Our remaining assignments will be very crucial."

Austria sees a dangerous foe in the Wheelers, the newcomers who have gone down fighting in their last four games.

MLEE, meanwhile, treat its without collegiate stars Calvin Abueva, Ronald Pascual and Ian Sangalang of San Sebastian and Far Eastern University's Jeff Garcia.

The star quartet are all aiming for their rebirth in the PBA, while two Bola gunner Garvo Lanete also remains a doubtful starter due to a shoulder injury.

Although FE Ana Cliff Hodge and Chris Ellis, together with Dave Marcelo and Beau Belga, are back in the lineup after their stint with the Philippine squad in the Southeast Asian Games, coach Bojet Fernandez said they had little practice with the Bead Warriors.

Kings end skid, freeze Aces run

By Jake Maraora

RAMBOUAT Gilas Pilipinas unleashed a weapon the crowd favorites have been keeping all along.

Nino Calvaterra produced his best game in a Gilas uniform, sparking the Gin Kings to an 89-77 win over the Manila Aces last night in the 35th Philippine Cup at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

"Kit claimed big for us, especially with his ability to ground the floor. He's also an additional rebounder and it's a luxury to have somebody who could shoot that well," said Barangay Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen of Calvaterra, who fired four of his team's 13 three-pointers and finished with 22 points.

Pushed into a make-or-break situation, the victory provided a breather for the Gin Kings as they improved to an even 3-3 record.

"Glad we lost, we'd have been down to the wirelings," said Tanquingcen.

Mark Caribeno had 15 points while Ali Stadious added 10 points and 17 rebounds as Manila downed Rankie Hall, 80-75, for its seventh victory in 11 games.

The Bolts built a 13-point lead spanning the third and fourth and held on despite a desperation run by the Energy anchored on Dillon Hilliker and rookie Dylan Madon that cut it down to an inside-two minutes.

"We didn't have anything to disuse because we want to make sure we're safe in the playoffs," said Meralco coach Ryan Gregorio.

The Energy lost their second straight, pulling them down to a tie with the Gin Kings.

With their eighth defeat against three victories, coach Joel Banal and his Aces fell behind the Barangay Tigers who have a 3-3 slate in their race for the eighth and final playoff spot.

The Results:
First Game
BRGY. GINEBRA 89—Caribeno 15, Dela Cruz 11, Hall 17, Aldemaid 10, Mariapol 3, Wilson 0, Tungcab 0, Calvaterra 22, Ilagan 0, Ayaay 0, Ahhuwan 11, Exciminiano 0, Ramos 0, Ilagan 0, Dela Cruz 11, Sweetz 11, Rosario 0, Sena 2, Bright 11, Salinas 5.
Quarters: 21-13, 42-40, 66-61, 89-77
Second Game
MERALCO 75—Cardona 17, Fajardo 10, Hodge 12, Ong 10, Tolentino 10, Lanete 0, Belvitso 0, Enriquez 0, Mendoza 0, Hingpit 0, Yap 0
ALASKA 78—Eriksen 14, Dennis 14, Arboleda 12, Dyke 0, Espinosa 7, Andrews 0, Jurado 9, Jones 0, Ellis 0
Quarters: 15-18, 31-32, 61-60, 80-75

NOMAD Kit Bunol (below) of Barangay Ginebra off Meralco's Yeng Chris Ervas. JAMES ALCANTARA

Stags, Tams try to oust Champions League foes

By Jasmine W. Payo

SAN SEBASTIAN hopes to take advantage of a sport reluctant squad, while Far Eastern University tries to coax a depleted Lorenzo lineup in the Philippine Collegiate Champions League today.

The Stags, the country-heavyweight boosted by NCAA MVP Calvin Abueva, kick off their bid against the Pelicans at 1:30 p.m. at the HRDF-Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Led by last year's UAAP MVP RR Garcia, the Tamaraws are also favored in the 3:30 p.m. duel where the Knights have to do without head coach Louie Alas and his ace and top gunner Revilla.

Lorenzo's Archers and ace rookie Jeff for the United States yesterday where Revilla was invited by a one-month training with the Los Angeles Lakers in the American Basketball Association.

"I think the team will manage," said the elder Alas after his Knights ousted La Salle, 86-61, in the stepladder tournament Tuesday.

The Falcons, who played back-to-back games in the PCCL and the PBA D-League Tuesday, also advanced by downing Jose Rizal University, 77-58.

"But I'll do the same thing again [today]," said Adamson's Leo Austria, who, together with his son-players, will trade moves in the PBA D-League after their match against the Stags.

"We've just running the same system so it doesn't matter which ones we play."

Adamson's Kenjan center Asaite Manyaro buried 16 points against the Steelers as the falcons also drew solid games from Jerus Lumada, Jerish Cañeda and Jan Colina.

PH sports again seeks China help for Olympics

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SHANYENG from the Southeast Asian Games debacle, Philippine sports is looking to reigning Olympics and Asian Games champion China for much-needed assistance in future international stints.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Bebot Garcia yesterday unveiled the memorandum of understanding with his Chinese counterpart Liu Peng which will ensure an exchange of sports technology and resources between the two countries with the London Games now just an immediate target.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. was also present during the affair. The PSC and the Chinese Sports Ministry signed the MOU last August and will be implemented as soon as possible, according to Garcia.

Both Garcia and Cojuangco refused to give an assessment of what happened in the Indonesia SEA Games, which ended Tuesday with the country marching to poorest performance in the biennial meet of nine plum with 36 gold medals.

Liu assured the full support of his countryto take the level of competitiveness of Filipino athletes.

"We have a long history together and we have strengthened our friendships in the last decades," said Liu through a translator.

PAL LADIES

Southwoods widens lead over DM gals

MANY'S Maria Aurea Flores (left) breaks free from Pachanga's Jane Basilio. JOAN BONDOC

DASMA...A dazzling 5-under performance anchored on the 52 of Joyce Ayala boosted Manila Southwoods-Monarch to a whopping lead of 32 over closest pursuer Del Monte in the championship division of the ninth Philippine Airlines (PAL) Ladies Interclub tournament at the Rancho Pelo Negro Golf and Country Club this Wednesday.

Ayala, who missed at least three easy birdies putts in the first round, drained two birdies on the front nine then added two more on both par-5s from way out of the back side to grab the individual lead at 108 after two rounds at the short 5,099-yard course.

Myra Legaspi contributed a 52 and Lora Roberto canned in the third score with a 54 for 160, as Southwoods posted a 324 total overall in the best-to-play, three-to-count format of the event, which was revived by organizer Philippine Airlines (PAL) this year after years of chance from the lady golfers around the country.

"We are pleased but we'll not be complacent," said Southwoods captain Imelda Alfonso.

Del Monte, which only trailed by four at the start of the second round, failed to keep up with the balanced scoring of the Southwoods' ladies. Eva Millora, sister of reserved pro Frankie Millora, put in a team best 86. Twelve-year-old Bahrain Rogue had a 45 and Jeanne Lazaro contributed 51.

Negros squad also pulled away from Alabang in the Founders Division as Anya Tanpiv, co-floated out a 84/Gaby Mendiola, a 42, and Maite Lanza, a 39 to give the Bacolod-based squad 126 for the day and a 268 aggregate.

Still our hero

HEART, SOUL, SPORTS

DANNY HOMAN

SO MUCH has been written about our very own Manny Pacquiao's "press" performances against his arch rival Juan Manuel Marquez.

Please allow me to share with you my thoughts on the matter.

In all his past fights, his opponents were bigger than he was but much slower, and this is why he was able to beat them.

This was not the situation in the last fight.

Marquez trained hard for this match and you could see this from the shape of his body. He added weight through muscle but, surprisingly, this did not compromise his speed.

This is what bothered Manny

...

However, at the end of the day, he is, Manny has earn many odds or things to contend with.

...

Through success he has acquired endless fits, a life that actually we, his fans, have built up for him.

Balancing all these aspects could be actually more difficult than winning a world championship because one's focus is compromised.

Let us try to remember what he has given to the country—hope that through hard work and sacrifice, dreams can indeed come true.

Let us not dump on our hero now.

Mabuhay ka, Manny!

...

Please send comments for this to

Pachanga, Kaya reach quarterfinals

By Cedriff Tapas

PACHANGA kept its composure in the penalty shootout and banked out a pulsating 4-2 victory over Barry Buf Jalve Tuesday night to reach the quarterfinals of the United Football League Cup at the University of Makati pitch.

Second baller Jolibee Jolibee Alfie Cacolores with a spectacular diving save and substitute Joshua Hoddoro clinched the win with a well-placed shot to the left corner as Pachanga forged a quarterfinal showdown with defending champion Global FC.

Regulation play and extra time ended scoreless, marking the first draw in the tournament that a game was extended, despite Pachanga enjoying a lot of possession and Navy posing a resource threat with its quick counterattacks.

"I thought we underestimated Navy that's why we didn't play the way we should be playing," said coached Pachanga coach Norman Bagdeva. "Our combination plays were not there."

Kaya Gigasi and Green Archers United also reached the quarterfinals with victories over Team Sarmiento (2-0) and Loyal Bulilipat Reef (3-0) respectively Tuesday night.

Manasseh Dawara and Nate Hankey scored a goal each in the second half for Kaya, which struggled to find a way to break down a compact but overcrowded.

The Archers scored three goals during a 10-minute spell in the first half with Amin Bamadou, Gerald Pacquian and Enrique Romero-Salas finding the back of the net.

With the win, Kaya arranged a last eight showdown with Nomads Inc. Iron Maids, while Green Archers advanced against powerhouse Air Force Phoenix for a place in the semifinals.

Top seed Loyola Meralco Sparks, hammered by Phil and James Younghusband, have yet to face Southern Garden United by the round of 16 with the winner playing Philsteel FC on Nov. 30.

Pachanga had a chance to score early in the second half, but Jesse Bello's well-struck header from an Abi Kigbo cross rattled off the crossbar, while Cacolores saved Lonie Kalalang's second close opportunities for Navy in the second half and in extra time.

RACING POST
By TOP CHOICE
At San Lazaro LP

BDO Cargill recap at AROG

ATTENDO Mendoza's eight-stroke romp at BDO Carabbang invitational will be featured on AROG Carabbang invitational with be featured on Asian Golf Digest's Golf Digest Tour, Sky Cable Digital (Channel 70), and Cablelink (Channel 23).

Focus will also be on Rubben Bagtron on the ICTSI Profiles.

Aunzo leads ICTSI golf by a stroke

PERFECT Aunzo puts the field behind him after the first round with a 69. ICTSI PHOTO

By Cyrell P. Tupas

PEKOE: Aunzo, badly needing a confidence boost, fired a three-under 69 yesterday to seize a one-shot lead over the in-form Elmer Salvador and long shot Bernard Baloro at the start of the P1-million ICTSI Pitch 'Work Championship at the Subic Bay Golf and Country Club.

Looking to end a two-year 'lean' title drought, the 32-year-old Aunzo was streaking on a five-under round going into the final three holes before stumbling with a double bogey on 16 that left him having to tap-in on a day where only eight players in the 97-man field broke par.

"I'm not playing my best this year, but that's golf," the soft-spoken Aunzo, whose last victory came in Gamefair in the inaugural leg of the Tour in 2009, said. "I feel good with my swing but I still couldn't say if this good enough to win here. I just want to build a solid three-victory game."

Aunzo banked a bogey-minus on No. 2 by sinking three straight birdies from No. 6 inside 10 feet, before making 12-footer for birdie on No. 15, the barely missed an eagle putt from 10 feet at the par-5 13.

Salvador, the winner at Sherwood Hills and the runner-up to the Orchard and Apo legs in this year's Tour, posted rounds of 73, firing four birdies against two bogeys in his bid to become the first player to win back-to-back birdies for a 33 on the back nine.

The crowded Franklin Millman shot an even 72 to go unheralded Marlon Dizon and Rolando Mueller for a share of sixth spot in the tournament sponsored by International Container Terminal Services Inc. and organized by Filipinas Golf Tournaments Inc.

"I'm satisfied with my record," said Millena, who had a solid round that included three birdies despite being hobbled a knee injury he suffered early in the year while playing in the Champions Tour in the United States.

The scores: 1 Aunzo 69 (3-5-3-2—3-3-3-3-3—3-3-3-3—3-3-3-3—

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HIGHLIGHTS OF A GREEN COMMUNITY:

- 5-hour-super-nature-inspired community along Ave. Rotonda Avenue on the Ayala Center
- Transit-oriented address with a direct connection to the LRT-2 and MRT-3 trains, with the completion of the new LRT/MRT loop an added advantage
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DID YOU KNOW

ONE IN FIVE women between the ages of 15 and 49 has experienced physical violence since the age of 15, according to the recent National Demographic and Health Survey. The survey, conducted in 2008 by the National Statistics Office, showed that around 14.3 percent of married women have been physically abused by their husbands while 37 percent of separated or widowed women have experienced physical violence. —Zaldy Dandan, Inquirer Research

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Edsa to be renamed Cory Avenue?

House bill seeks to honor late president; opposition slams proposal

By Cynthia D. Balana

FROM Epifanio de los Santos to Cory Aquino Avenue?

A bill seeking to change the name of one of Metro Manila's busiest thoroughfares has been filed in the House of Representatives.

But early however, the proposal has has already drawn flak from a member of the opposition.

"Edsa has acquired a very significant historical meaning that should not be tampered [with]. I think that is a very partisan measure," House Minority Leader Robert Lagman said in a press conference yesterday.

"It's difficult to erase the name Edsa because that [highway] is already an institution. We should honor rather than discard it," he added.

If supporters of President Aquino really want to name a highway after his mother, it should be the road leading to Hacienda Luisita, which is owned by their family and not the main circumferential road in Metro Manila named after a noted Filipino historian, Lagman went on to say.

House Bill No. 3422, filed by Bohol Rep. Rene Lopez Relampagos, seeks to rename the busy thoroughfare—the site of two People Power revolutions—after the late president.

According to Relampagos, one cannot think of Edsa without thinking of Corazon Aquino who rose to power as a result of her first Edsa revolution in 1986.

"Even after her term as president of the Republic, she lived her life fighting for democracy," he said.

"It would be but a fitting tribute to former President Corazon C. Aquino, a woman of courage and valor, that Edsa—[the] avenue that became [a] testament to the country's love of democracy, be named after her," the congressman added.

In 2005, then Sen. Jinggoy Estrada made a similar proposal, a few days after the former president died of colon cancer. The proposal, however, was withdrawn without an explanation just a few hours after his office released a statement announcing it.

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PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
Young acrobats attract the attention of the curious as they practice their routine at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City. INQUIRER.NET PHOTO

Tips for a safe, fire-free and merry holiday season

By DJ Yap

LET'S HOPE TYPHOONS be merry, not fiery.

Fire authorities in Metro Manila have been placed on heightened alert in anticipation of incidents involving defective Christmas lights which have been blamed for fires during the yuletide in years past.

The Bureau of Fire Protection National Capital Region (BFP-NCR) issued yesterday a reminder to the public to avoid buying low quality Christmas lights sold at very cheap prices.

"We would like to remind the public to be extra careful in buying Christmas lights which might turn out to be substandard. According to our statistics, this is one of the main causes of fires that caused several houses in Metro Manila," said Chief Supt. Santiago Laguna, BFP-NCR director.

In a statement, he said he had already directed all fire district directors, city and town fire marshals to intensify their campaign in educating the community about fire safety, particularly the use of Christmas lights.

Laguna added that he had also instructed them to conduct inspections of all commercial establishments around Metro Manila to make sure that the Christmas lights being sold complied with the safety standards of

TIPS, A22

Lone 6/49 Lotto winner claims ₱93.5-M jackpot

By Mike Frialde

THE LONE winner in Tuesday night's SuperLotto 6/49 draw showed up yesterday morning at the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in Pasay City to claim his prize of a whopping ₱93.5 million.

PCSO General Manager Jose Ferdinand Rojas II said that based on the information given out by his staff, the new millionaire was a 50-year-old retired coal miner broker with three children.

"He was watching the live draw which we aired at 9 p.m. and after the draw, he said he was restless," Rojas added.

In fact, the man admitted that he spent the night tossing and turning as he thought about what he would spend the money on.

He added that he later decided that it would make him feel better if he were to claim his prize the following day.

Rojas said that the man had played a bet on "lucky pick" numbers. The winning combination in Tuesday night's draw were 10-21-26-34-37-45.

When asked what he would do with the money, the winner said he intended to buy a house and lot for his family and donate a portion of the prize to parishes being cared for by PCSO, Rojas added.

The agency's records showed that the man bought the winning ticket from a lone outlet on Hidalgo Street in Quiapo, Manila.

Meanwhile, two bettors who picked the winning 4-13-19-20-29-30 combination during Monday night's Lotto 6/42 draw would split the ₱7.5 million pot, Rojas said.

One of the winners was a 37-year-old resident of Bacoor, Cavite who works at a factory in the province. She had been playing lotto bets for more than 10 years, she admitted.

She told the PCSO official that with the money, she would send her children all the way to college.

The other winner has yet to claim his or her share of the jackpot prize.

On the other hand, no one guessed the winning combination for the Lotto 6/42 draw on Tuesday.

The winning numbers were 5-6-19-15-29-40 with the jackpot prize estimated at around ₱8 million.

Man loses pickup to 3 masked men

By Nina Calleja

A MAN lost his pickup to three masked men who took his vehicle at gunpoint in front of an eatery in Pasig City early Wednesday.

Darwin Rivera Bicar, a 32-year-old resident of Pembo Village, Barangka Ibaba, Makati City, placed the police immediately after the incident which happened at the corner of Dr. Carlos Arnoso and Malagasan Street in Barangay Sta. Lucia around 1 a.m.

Bicar, who was with a friend, parked the pickup, a Mitsubishi Strada 2010 model, with plate number WIL-600, along the street to have an early "breakfast at a popular 'pulutan' haunt.

When they were about to board the pickup, three men wearing masks suddenly appeared and pointed their guns at them, said Senior Insp. Jessie Cardeno of the Eastern Police District.

After the victim was forced to give the men the keys to his pickup, the suspects fumbled the vehicle and sped off.

Brief chase

Bicar called the attention of the civilian volunteers patrolling the area to monitor the vehicle, but the latter lost track of the suspects in the later chase that followed.

The victim described one of the suspects as 5'4" and 5'6" in height and of medium build.

He said they were hard put at describing their facial features because of the masks they wore.

'Colorum' tricycles down in Caloocan

By Kristine Felizas Manguiat

THE NUMBER of "colorum" tricycles plying the roads of Caloocan City has gone down significantly compared to three years ago when a campaign against them was not yet in place.

According to a report by the city's Tricycle and Dockside Regulation Office, a total of 336 tricycles operating without a franchise were seized by the local government from January to October this year.

The figure was drawn from the 364 tricycles impounded during the same period in 2008 when the "Zero Colorum" program had yet to be launched.

According to Mayor Enrico Echiverri, the decrease can largely be attributed to the program which ended in 2010.

SAFETY FIRST

A man and his sunglass-wearing furry traveling companion, both decked out in safety helmets, enjoy a motorcycle ride on Roxas Boulevard in Manila yesterday. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Amnesty for operators

Under the Zero Colorum campaign, some 2,000 operators of colorum tricycles applied for and were granted a franchise by the city government.

The members of the 100 organizations of tricycle operators and drivers in the city were also required to renew their franchise every year.

"Even though the Zero Colorum program has ended, its positive effects continue to be felt," Echiverri said.

He added that the local government's "unrealistic campaign" against many errant drivers, including those who did not have a driver's license or piled their rooms even without a mayor's permit.

According to him, one of the programs lauded by the "reformed earnings" enjoyed by legitimate tricycle drivers and operators with the disappearance of their colorum competitors.

The mayor's statement was backed up by a tricycle driver who identified himself only as Joey. He plies a route in Barangay 179.

He said that the ₱300 he would usually take home after a day's work has gone up to between ₱500 and ₱700, depending on the number of trips he makes.

"Yes, somehow I think (the program) helped," he told the reporter in Filipino.

He added, however, that in the past months, his take-home money had been "constantly changing" because of the fluctuating prices of fuel.

This year alone, local oil companies raised the prices of their gasoline and diesel products at least 12 times.

As earlier this month, Petron Corp., Isaacl Philippines, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Chevron Philippines and Total Philippines, among others, slashed their prices for premium gasoline, regular gasoline and kerosene.

Diesel prices also went down by 15 to 25 centavos a liter.

Joey said that like his fellow tricycle drivers, he requested oil companies to once again reduce a little on the prices of their products sometime this year.

"That's what actually happens. They decrease prices then later raise them again," he complained.

MANILA, QC MOST AFFECTED AREAS

DOH reports hike in leptospirosis cases

By Jocelyn R. Uy

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

The Department of Health (DOH) in Metro Manila yesterday urged the public to rid their homes of rodents to curb the spread of leptospirosis in the capital.

Based on the latest record of the Regional Epidemiology Surveillance Unit, the number of cases in the metropolis went up this year with 583 cases and 48 deaths reported from January to Nov. 12.

Manila accounted for the highest number of cases with 117, followed by Quezon City with 101.

Dr. Eduardo Janairo, DOH regional director for Metro Manila, said that to avoid rodent infestation at home, foods big enough to transmit the bacteria should be covered.

Food sources and other items that could serve as a shelter for rats must also be removed.

According to him, rodents, especially rats and mice, are primary carriers of the leptospirosis virus which is commonly transmitted by wading in floodwaters contaminated with their urine.

Its symptoms include fever, chills and a severe headache which usually appear within four to 14 days following exposure to contaminated floodwaters or mud. Other signs are red eyes, jaundice, sun-colored urine and difficulty in urinating.

Janairo said it is also important to recognize signs of rodent infestation at home. "If you regularly see rodent droppings around food packages, in drawers or cupboards or under the sink, then your house is infested," he warned.

"Storing materials such as shredded paper, fabric, dried plant matters and traces of gnawing on food packages are also signs that rats are present in the house, he added.

Janairo said to minimize exposure to rodents, traps and baits and to avoid touching powder to control rodent infestation.

"[But] as a precautionary measure, always place traps, baits and rodent-touching powder in places where children and pets cannot reach them [and] use rodenticide products according to label directions and precautions," he said.

The secret to Erap's excellent health

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE SUPREME Court has sent a message to Malacañang that it is not a toothless tiger that can be fooled around with.

The high court has brought to the archive again the decades-old dispute over Hacienda Luisita between President Noy's family, which owns the vast sugar plantation, and its farmer-workers.

Most justices, according to Inquirer sources, are in favor of distributing the 6,000-hectare plantation to its farmworkers.

In other words, the President don't hastily to abuse to lose to the land dispute.

The decision that is about to come out is apparently to avoid actions for the humiliation that the high court suffered in the hands of Malacañang.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima refused to obey an order from the high tribunal allowing former President Gloria to travel abroad to seek medical treatment.

It is not only in the manner, a manner of arrest against the former president suddenly surrendered from Pasay City, issued by a judge known for taking his time with the cases in his court.

While the issuance of the arrest warrant, the Supreme Court's decision for Gloria to travel abroad had become moot and academic.

Another case PNoy argued people to believe in his moral crusade when his family doesn't have a sense of moral rectitude?

• • •

I have known the record of former President Erap's excellent health despite that heavy drinking and smoking.

The guy doesn't bear any grudges towards people who have hurt him.

At my birthday party Tuesday night, Erap and former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson were present.

As the former President entered the room he saw Chavit among the crowd.

He asked me if Chavit could join him at his table.

I told Singson about Erap's wish and the former obliged.

The two apprehensive as I brought Singson to Erap, but my fears were soon dissipated.

"Here, did you win big in the Pangasinan Mindex Jackpot?" Erap asked Chavit by way of breaking the ice.

And then the two talked and laughed for hours as if nothing happened between them.

As we all know, Chavit's testimony against then President Erap resulted in his fall from power.

If President Noy wants to live long he can learn a thing or two from Erap: He should forgive his enemies.

Hurting revenge takes a toll on one's health.

TO THE RESCUE

Rescue volunteers administer first aid to Lorenzo Ludovice who was injured after the motorcycle he was riding on hit a parked taxi cab on Aliaga Street in Sta. Mesa, Manila. Witnesses said that Ludovice was racing with three other motorcycle riders before the accident. ARNOLD ALMACEN

Tips for a safe, fire-free …

(From page A23)

the Department of Trade and Industry.

At the same time, he reminded the public to look for the Import Commodity Clearance (ICC) mark which is proof that the item complies with standards and is safe to use.

Officials cited the case of the daughter of former congressman Jose de Venecia, Kristina Carmelyn "KC" de Venecia, who died in December 2004 in a fire believed caused by faulty Christmas lights in their Makati residence.

"To strike to avoid similar incidents, we would like to remind the public to ensure that all electrically operated appliances especially Christmas lights should be properly installed by a competent licensed electrician," Lapeña said.

He also advised other fire safety tips and guidelines for a fire-free holiday:

► Never leave wrapping paper, boxes or other trash in the fireplace; don't leave a fire unattended; put the fire out before going to bed; make sure candles are in stable and secure holders and keep them away from combustible materials and small children.

► Never leave candles unattended; check holiday lights and replace cracked or broken bulbs, frayed wires and check loose plugs. Don't use lights that are not safe and in case of fire and other emergencies, call the hotline 117.

Al-Qaida chief recalls 'human side' of Osama bin Laden

CAIRO—Here's how the new head of al-Qaida remembers Osama bin Laden: A sensitive man who cried when his friends lost family members, remained close to his children despite the hard life of his international jihadist, and finally restores, herself, by natio—the 9/11 man who carried out the deadliest terrorist attack ever on US soil.

Longtime bin Laden deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri, now al-Qaida's new head, related these and other memories in a new video message on jihadist websites Tuesday. In the video, al-Zawahiri said he wants "to show the human side" of Bin Laden's life.

In doing so, he also is likely trying to boost his own popularity by emphasizing his closeness to the terror group's former, more charismatic leader.

Bin Laden, who built al-Qaida into the world's most feared and dreaded terror organization, died nearly nine months ago when U.S. special forces stormed his deadliest attacks, was killed by Navy SEALS in May during a raid in Pakistan. Al-Zawahiri assumed control of the organization shortly after, though reports say he lacks Bin Laden's charisma, which drew many to the group.

Throughout the 30-minute, conversational video, apparently the first in a series, al-Zawahiri emphasizes what he calls the "nobility" of Bin Laden's character—as well as his own proximity to him.

"People don't know that the tone was modest, gentle, kind, with refined feelings, even when his tone hard," he said, evoking a salma robe and turban and sitting in front of a generic curtain. "He never uses a tone like this."

Al-Zawahiri told stories of how bin Laden remembered al-Qaida members who died fighting "infidel," or "holy war." He pays special attention to the kindness he showed to the families who carried out the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 in the US, which killed nearly 3,000 people.

"The sheikh would remember with goodness and gratitude and he moved by the memory of the 19 brothers who attacked the idol of our age, America—the Pentagon, the financial quarters of its military power, and New York, the symbol of its economic power," he said, praising bin Laden for emphasizing. "He would remember those brothers remembering their families."

He recalled one time when bin Laden was hiding in the Afghan mountains of Tora Bora, saying bin Laden never doubted reinforcements would arrive. "He never saw a man like him."

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At one point, al-Zawahiri recalled Bin Laden's reaction when al-Zawahiri got the news that some members of his family had been killed. Bin Laden runs to him with tears in his eyes and hugged him, he said.

Al-Zawahiri devotes much of his talk to Bin Laden's relationships with his children, saying he paid great attention to educating them well despite having to move from place to place.

"Everyone chose to him one the four and noble education in his children," he said.

Bin Laden brought in a teacher after would threaten to beat the children with a stick to teach them the Quran, the Islamic holy book, al-Zawahiri said.

To overhaul the video, al-Zawahiri revealed when the two men and one of Bin Laden's sons were driving a truck in the dark to Afghanistan and decided to split up for safety. Bin Laden went to say goodbye to his son, not knowing when, or if, he would see him again, al-Zawahiri said.

"He told him, My son, we are keeping our oath, fighting jihad in the path of Allah," he said. AP

BIN LADEN

Tipster on Kennedy's assassin honored

THE SEAT at the Texas Theater where President John F. Kennedy assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was sitting when he was arrested in Dallas.

DALLAS—Dallas police honored a man on Sunday whose "keen observation skills and strong sense of civic duty" led them to Lee Harvey Oswald, who had crept into the back of a darkened movie theater to hide on Nov. 22, 1963, shortly after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Police Chief David Brown presented Johnny Calvin Brewer with the department's Citizen's Certificate of Merit and praised his selfless act and "exemplary conduct" 48 years ago during a ceremony at the Texas Theater—the same place where Oswald was captured about 40 minutes after Kennedy was killed.

"I'm just so overwhelmed," Brewer, 93, said after receiving the award and watching a video of his 22-year-old self recounting the events of those days.

Brewer, a manager at a shoe store located about 90 steps from the Oak Cliff neighborhood theater, was standing in some square about the presidential motorcade when he heard reports that a Dallas police officer, J.D. Tippit, had been killed a few blocks away.

A man whose behavior seemed suspicious then walked into the lobby of the shoe store. Brewer said the man stared at the display in the window and acted wound as police cars with blaring sirens raced by.

After the last squad car passed in one direction, the man stepped out of the store and walked in the opposite direction toward the movie theater.

Brewer saw him go into the theater without buying a ticket. He followed him, alerting the workers in the box office to call police. Brewer then shared his suspicions with the concession operator and the two watched the theater and stood by the emergency exit.

Standing room behind the sliding exit door, Brewer spread it only to have police guns aimed at him. The movie theater lights were on and Brewer pointed out the suspicious man seated in the theater. Oswald was arrested after a brief scuffle, during which he punched an officer and pulled a gun.

As Oswald was taken from the theater he hollered: "I am not resisting arrest," according to testimony Brewer gave to the Warren Commission that investigated the president's death. Oswald was shot and killed two days later by nightclub owner Jack Ruby in the basement of police headquarters while being transferred to the county jail.

Since then, Brewer said he served in the Navy and then moved to Austin, where he still lives, having retired from a career in radio.

Becoming hostile members, including two grandchildren, and friends who called him a humble man, were on hand for Tuesday's ceremony.

"My Brewer made a difference in the history of the United States," Deputy Police Chief Randy Blankenbaker said. "You not only helped to capture the man who shot the president of the United States but you also helped us capture a man who killed one of our police officers."

Tippit's widow expressed her gratitude to Brewer, as did retired Dallas police officer Ray Hawkins.

"I think it's a little late, but I'm glad he's finally getting recognition. He's deserving," said Hawkins, who said he handcuffed Oswald that day.

Brown speculated that the telltale did not come sooner because Dallas has been trying to move away from the tragedy it's been associated with for so long that "many of the details of the actions by citizens like Mr. Brewer have been left behind."

But Brown, who became chief last year, said as the department began trying to revisit its legacy and history, Brewer's story just "jumped out."

Last year, Darrin Rondstadt III, a Texas analyst and JFK historian, brought their attention to Temple E Bowley, who climbed in to Tippit's squad car moments after he was slain and used the police radio to call for help. After Bowley was issued a commendation, the chief asked Rondstadt if there was anyone else who was missed and research revealed Brown. AP

UN vote slams Syria crackdown on protests

UNITED NATIONS—A key UN human rights committee on Tuesday condemned the Syrian government's deadly crackdown on protests, heightening international pressure on President Bashar al-Assad.

Only 12 nations joined Syria in opposing the resolution backed by 122 countries in the UN General Assembly's human rights committee, with Syria's UN envoy accusing Britain, France and Germany of "inciting civil war" by pressing for the vote.

The resolution "strongly condemns the continued gross and systematic human rights violations by the Syrian authorities," highlighting the "arbitrary execution" and "persecution" of protesters and human rights defenders.

It joined international calls demanding a halt to the violence.

Russia and China last month vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning Assad's crackdown since March, which the UN says has left more than 3,500 dead. The two potentially joined the 11 countries to abstain in the latest vote.

"The international community, by unanimous attack," said Britain's UN ambassador Mark Lyall Grant as the committee vote where he stressed the Syrian government's failure to carry out an Arab League peace plan.

Arab nations Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Qatar were among the 61 countries to cosponsor the resolution.

Syria got the lowest number of countries to support for any of the country-specific votes at the UN human rights committee session this year, with North Korea and Burma (Myanmar) were also the subject of resolutions.

Syria's UN envoy, Bashar Jaafari, accused the European nations of conducting a "political, diplomatic and media war."

He said Britain, France and Germany were "part of the machinery of violence in my country" and were "propagating civil war and sedition" in Syria.

"How can you believe they are not interfering when they are inciting civil war?" said Jaafari, who was given support in speeches by Iranian, North Korean, Venezuelan and Cuban envoys.

After Russia and China vetoed the Security Council resolution last month—banning it would be used as an excuse to carry out regime change—Western powers said they would return to the UN's supreme body to get condemnation.

The Arab League move to suspend Syria and order sanctions has strengthened the case for action by the Security Council, according to western diplomats.

Egypt, where new unrest is rocking the country, supported the resolution.

Saudi ambassador Abdallah al-Mouallimi stressed the Arab League efforts to end the violence but pointed the finger at the Assad government when he said "Obstacles have been put in place which impede these goals." AFP

Syrian forces kill 23 civilians, 5 deserters

AMMAN—Syrian forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad killed 23 civilians and five army deserters on Tuesday in a crackdown on an eight-month uprising against Assad's rule, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Among those killed were four children shot dead by troops near a school in the central region of Homs and a 12-year-old killed at a protest in the eastern city of Deir al-Zor, said the group, which is led by exiled dissident Rami Abdelrahman.

Four deserters were killed when troops stormed a farm where they were hiding near the southern city of Deraa on the Jordan border. The troops also shot dead six villagers at the farm.

A fifth deserter was killed in Qusseir near the Lebanese border, the group said.

It was not possible to confirm the killings independently.

The authorities, who blame the unrest on "armed terrorist groups," have banned most independent media.

A YouTube video purportedly showed one of the soldiers, 40-decider Maher Arslan, lying on the floor of a house in Homs with a bullet wound to the back of his head surrounded by members of his family. Local activists said an unnamed colonel entered the region overnight and troops started roadblocks after a funeral for an activist turned into an anti-Assad protest. They added that tanks fired heavy machine guns and mortar bombs at residential areas and apartments opened fire at random in the morning.

Four people were killed in raids on residential districts, including a disabled man in the neighborhood of Khalidiya, and firing from roadblocks in the provincial capital of Homs, 22 km southeast of Hirula, the Observatory said. Reuters

S. Koreans remember deadly N. Korean attack

MEXICAN soldiers arrange one tables with stacks of US hundred dollar bills during a presentation on the media in Mexico City.

YEONPYEONG ISLAND—Shots pierced the morning quiet on Yeonpyeong Island on Wednesday as South Korean troops marked the first anniversary of a deadly North Korean artillery attack with a volley of gunfire. Residents laid flowers to remember the dead.

At the city of Incheon on the mainland, President Lee Myung-bak visited the families of the four South Koreans killed in the attack for a solemn tribute at the National Cemetery south of Seoul.

Later, in a symbolic show of resolve, the South Korean military are set to launch a massive exercise involving around half-dozen warships, fighter launchers and self-propelled guns deploying forward. The drills are to begin as the same time that North Korea fired 130 shells on Yeonpyeong Island last year, military officials said.

It has been one year since North Korea launched the artillery attack on Yeonpyeong, a front-line island just 11 kilometers from North Korean shores that is home to fishing families as well as military garrisons.

Two construction workers and two marines were killed in an attack that was the first to target a civilian area since the two-year Korean War ended in a cease-fire in 1953.

The shelling brought the front of all-out war back to the Korean peninsula. South Korea acknowledged launching the attack after warning the South not to carry out live-fire drills in the disputed waters dividing the two Koreas. More than 1,500 shells fell on the island guarded by South Korean marines, causing the small fishing community to take to bunkers and leaving the residents to evacuate by boat.

South Korea's main newspaper said Wednesday that South Korea provoked the attack by conducting drills across the Korean border. Reuters

"The pursuit of continued military confrontation and war will eventually bring about the fate of devastation," the Bodong Sinmun said.

North Korea disputes the maritime border drawn by the UN at the close of the war, and there are deadly naval gunfights have taken place in the Yellow Sea waters since 1999. South Korea also holds North Korea responsible for the sinking of one of its warships in March last year, 46 sailors were killed. Pyongyang denies involvement. AP

Thai jailed for texts vs monarchy

BANGKOK—A Thai court on Wednesday sentenced a man to 20 years in prison for sending text messages deemed insulting to the monarchy, his lawyer said, under the kingdom's strict lese-majeste laws.

Ampon Tangnoppakul, 61, was found guilty of four counts of sending messages to the private secretary of then-prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in May 2010, according to the criminal court in Bangkok.

"The court found him guilty and sentenced him to 20 years in jail," his lawyer Amnuay Nuanpla told AFP, adding that he had 30 days to lodge an appeal.

Ampon was arrested in August last year and pleaded not guilty to the charges during his trial.

After his arrest, Thailand's Central Bureau of Investigation said the messages were "inappropriate" and considered insulting to the monarchy and bore upon the sculptures," without revealing their content.

The royal family is a very sensitive subject in Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 83, is the world's longest-reigning monarch and revered as a near-god by many Thais. AFP

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casco

Yemen's Saleh to sign Gulf exit plan

SANAA—Braving 10 months of massive street protest and spiraling violence, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was finally to sign a Gulf plan in Riyadh on Wednesday that will end his 33-year hard-line rule.

Yemeni television said Saleh arrived in the Saudi capital early on Wednesday while UN envoy to Yemen Jamal Benomar confirmed the 69-year-old president was to sign the Gulf Cooperation Council-brokered deal under which he will immediately hand power to his deputy.

"The signing ceremony will take place today in Riyadh," Benomar told AFP by telephone.

SALEH

The opposition signed the deal in April but Saleh has repeatedly stalled, triggering months of political deadlock that has left the government in a state of chaos and the economy in shambles.

Benomar said both parties would also sign a UN-crafted roadmap which sets a mechanism for implementing the Gulf plan, under which Saleh will hand power to his deputy to ensure he is immune from prosecution.

According to the agreement, Saleh will on signing immediately hand "all necessary constitutional powers to his deputy Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi," a diplomat in session said.

Yemeni television said Saleh was in Riyadh "in response to an invitation by the Saudi leadership to attend the signing of the Gulf Initiative and its implementation mechanism ... to take the country out of its crisis," it said.

Saleh's visit came after the UN Yemen envoy said on Tuesday a deal aimed at ending months of political deadlock had been approved both by the opposition and by the president.

"All the parties have agreed to implement the GCC Initiative," Benomar had told reporters in the capital Sanaa.

Official Yemeni television said Saleh, who had previously refused to sign the deal despite street protests, was to "attend the signing of the Gulf cooperation' initiative and the implementation mechanism." Political sources said Saleh will remain an honorary president for a period of 90 days, after which Hadi will be elected as a consensus president for a two-year interim period.

During the transition period, Saleh will not be able to enforce any political decisions nor veto those of Hadi.

The deputy leader of the ruling General People's Congress, Sultan al-Barakani, told AFP Tuesday that final touches are being made to the implementation mechanism and the document of guarantees to the president and his entourage, based on the Gulf plan.

Benomar said Sunday that a UN Security Council meeting on Yemen scheduled for Monday was postponed.

State news agency Saba reported Tuesday that Saleh received a telephone call from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon who "thanked him for positively responding to the UN resolution 2014."

The political crisis has also exacerbated tensions on the street where tens of thousands of anti-regime protesters have faced a brutal 10-month government crackdown that has left hundreds dead and thousands wounded. AFP

Protesters nix Egypt's military offer

CAIRO—Egypt's military rulers promised to speed up a presidential election to the first half of 2012 and said the armed forces were prepared to hold a referendum on immediately shifting power to civilians—reactions swiftly rejected by tens of thousands of protesters in Tahrir Square, who shouted, "Leave! Leave!"

The latest standoff plunged the country deeper into crisis less than a week before parliamentary elections, the first since the uprising that ended the reign of longtime authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak.

In a televised address to the nation on Tuesday, Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi rejected all criticism of the military's handling of the transitional period and sought to cast himself and the generals on the military council he heads as the nation's foremost patriots, significantly, he made no mention of the throngs of protesters gathered in Tahrir Square to demand that he step down immediately in favor of an interim civilian council.

Tantawi spoke as protesters fought street battles and police for a fourth day in streets leading to the iconic square that was the birthplace of Egypt's uprising, particularly near the heavily fortified Interior Ministry, which is in charge of police. Nearly 30 people have been killed in the violence, mostly in Cairo, and at least 2,000 have been wounded.

"The demands are clear," said Khaled El-Sayed, a protester from the Youth Revolution Coalition and a candidate in the Nov. 28 parliamentary election. "We want the military council to step down and hand over authority to a national salvation government with full authority."

The military previously floated the end of next year or early 2013 as the likely dates for the presidential election, which is widely being seen as the last step in the process of transferring power. But Tantawi did not mention a specific date for the vote or when the military would return to its barracks.

Furthermore, his offer for the military to step down immediately if the people so wished is considered unrealistic way signs at best, but it also alienated the generals' enemies in the youth groups that engineered the 18-day uprising that ousted Mubarak and which are again behind the massive, anti-military protest in Tahrir Square.

DREAM MACHINE Technicians inspect the Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) Curiosity rover which is scheduled to be launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Nov. 26. REUTERS

Libya unveils new gov't

TRIPOLI—Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC) formed a new government on Sunday with a line-up that dropped several unionist officials in favor of appointees who will resolve rivalries between regional factions.

Ousted leader Muammar Gadhafi, killed in October, may be tried in Libya rather than in The Hague, according to how the death penalty if convicted.

The NTC faced the tricky task of forming a government which would reconcile regional and ideological interests without visibly favoring one militia over another. The new government, after the end of Gadhafi's 42-year rule.

"All of Libya is represented," Prime Minister Abdurahim El-Kib told a news conference in the capital after the line-up. "It is hard to say that any area is not represented."

Western countries, which backed the revolt against Gadhafi and have a big stake in seeing his replacements succeed, welcomed the new government, saying it would guide the oil-exporting country towards democracy.

The NTC's election to fill ministerial posts appointed to how per regional affiliation ahead of experience or match record.

Foreign diplomats had been encouraging Libya's interim to job to go to Libya's deputy envoy in the United Nations, Ibrahim Dabbashi.

A reported diplomat, he had rallied other Libyan officials to turn against Gadhafi soon after the revolt erupted against his rule.

Instead, the job was given to Ashour bin Hayal, a Britain-born diplomat from the eastern city of Derna, a long-standing anti-Gadhafi stronghold.

"Until the prime minister made his announcement, every diplomat in Tripoli was expecting Dabbashi to be foreign minister.

It's a big surprise," said one diplomat. "We don't know him (Bin Hayal) or all. We are trying to find out where he is."

All Tuesday, a US academic who returned from exile to manage the oil and finance portfolios in the rebellion against Gadhafi, lead no role in the new government. Reuters

American Express salutes Asia CEO Award 2011 Winners

American Express was the proud presenter of the recent Asia CEO Awards (ACA) held in November 10, 2011 at Manila Marriott Hotel, Newport City Complex. The awards night was a gathering of various distinguished corporations and individuals operating in the Philippines and the Asia Pacific region with more than 400 executives and senior leaders in attendance.

A total of 11 awards, including a special Lifetime Contribution Award, were given in recognition of the company's outstanding leadership excellence and accomplishments within their organizations or industries. The awards were presented by various executives who make up representatives of the business leaders.

1. SYNERGY Business Consulting Corporation, Team of the Year - Magsaysay Maritime Corporation
2. North Point Winner for Top Employer - Department of Health's Global Manager Technologies Philippines Corp.
3. PLDT/MyPhone Enterprise Winner for Global IT Infrastructure of the Year - Manila Electric
4. Winner for Most Admired Company - Globe Telecom
5. Wise Choice Winner for Most Admired Brand of the Year - SECURE
6. Business Mirror Winner for Most Innovative Company - Kaizen, Inc.
7. Total Winner for Quality Excellence Company - Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts in the Philippines
8. Gatchalian Cold Storage Winner for Safety & Marketing Team of the Year - Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc.
9. Integrated Insurance Winner for Financial Team of the Year - Asalud, Inc.
10. Accenture Winner for Technology Team of the Year - Philippine Airlines
11. Social Justice Society Winner for Lifetime Contribution - Cesar Virata and Nancy Sebastian

Mr. Kate Valentine, executive vice president and head of Global Merchant Services, Japan, Asia Pacific, Australia, American Express, shared his thoughts on leadership and his own personal experiences in Asia in using leadership as an instrument of change in his keynote speech delivered at the awards night.

As the presenter of the Asia CEO Awards, we recognize American Express corporate values such as leadership, quality, innovation and integrity in

In photo (from left to right): Sanjiv Malhotra, Vice President, Business Development, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express; Rob Richardson, Executive Vice President and Head of JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express; Walter O'Dell, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines; Sandy Rigi Rodrigues, Consultant of HR Marketing, Accenture; Shingo, Regional Marketing Manager, Commercial Products, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express; Grace Lange, Marketing Lead, Malaysia and Philippines, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express; Raji Bhasin, Managing Director of HR Marketing; Ashutosh Agrawal, Vice President, Head of Commercial Cards, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express; and Hamish Bhasin, Director for Marketing, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express.

Leading name in commercial cards, American Express serves more than 90% of the Fortune 500, as well as tens of thousands of mid-size companies around the world.

Kate Valentine, the Executive Vice President and Head of JAPA, Asia Pacific & Australia, JAPA, Global Network Services at American Express, gave the keynote speech before the awards ceremonies.

Gadhafi's son betrayed by his own desert guide

ZINTAN, Libya—Saif al-Islam Gadhafi was betrayed to his captors by a Libyan tribesman who says he was hired to help Muammar Gadhafi's son escape to neighboring Niger as the premier dear he would be paid one million euros.

Saif al-Islam, wanted for prosecution by the International Criminal Court, was captured as the mercenary on what can be called the country's new government said was "the final chapter in Libya's drama."

With a black scarf wrapped around his head, Yussef Saleh al-Hermasi said that he contacted revolutionary fighters in Libya's south to inform them where Saif al-Islam's convoy would be passing through the area on the night of Nov. 18.

"I made sure I believe that I trusted him," he said on Tuesday in Zintan, where Saif al-Islam is being held at a secret location before the details of his prosecution are finalized.

On the night of Saif al-Islam's capture, Hermasi said he was traveling with the younger Gadhafi's personal guard in the first car of their convoy.

"I had agreed with the fighters (who captured Saif al-Islam) that the first place for the rendezvous would be in a spot of desert that was surrounded by high ground," he said.

Ten fighters from Zintan, in the Western mountains, and five from Hermasi's own tribe, al-Hermasi, were waiting.

"When we arrived at the dark, deep hollow the gunfire was very precise, it only took about half a minute to capture the first car," he said, adding that he had intentionally

TUSSEF Saleh al-Hermasi REUTERS

told Saif al-Islam's convoy to leave the vehicles ignored. Then again to give the fighters time to regroup and for Hermasi to join them.

"When the second car arrived, we started to shoot very precisely, to damage the vehicle so he could not escape."

Saif al-Islam, dressed in a long robe and a brown head scarf wrapped around his face, jumped out of the car, tried to run, but was captured, says Hermasi. "We treated him as a prisoner of war."

It is unclear if Hermasi had planned to ransom Saif al-Islam from the moment he linked up with the fugitive's group in the Sahara desert, or if the destined saloon he had dismissed about his payment and feared that he might be killed.

The Suhaimi tunnel, who calls himself the "son of the desert," refused to give details on where or how he contacted the 15 fighters of the interim government who caught Saif al-Islam. Reuters

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Editor Raul G. Maronilla ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Q3 GDP growth seen at more than 4%

PH economy aided by service sector, lower inflation

By Nica T. Chicombra

THE PHILIPPINE economy likely grew by over 4 percent in the third quarter of 2011, some of the country's top economists said yesterday.

Gross domestic product or GDP for the third quarter may have grown "higher than four percent" on robust growth in the services sector and the fast tracking of government expenditures, National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) assistant director general for planning and policy Rupert B. Mejares said in a phone interview.

Lower than anticipated inflation, "respectable" growth in...

PH firms beat global peers in social media usage

By Michelle V. Barua

THE PHILIPPINES, earlier cited as one of the most tech-savvy countries in Asia, has beaten the global average in terms of the proportion of businesses that use social media as a means to market their products and boost revenues.

This is according to the results of the latest survey by Grant Thornton showing that 44 percent of companies in the country use social media—one of which is the social networking site Facebook—to improve profitability.

This figure is slightly higher than the global average of 43 percent, although slightly lower than the average of 45 percent for the Asian region.

Pennagharam A. Arocilla, a member of the Grant Thornton group, said that the proportion of Philippine businesses that use social media is expected to grow over the short term given the popularity of social media sites among Filipinos.

P&A said this popularity is cited by the significant number of Filipinos working offshore and who use social media to communicate with their families in the Philippines.

"Filipino businesses in particular have more of an incentive to use social media because of the large number of overseas Filipino workers that are all over the globe.

These online tools are probably the most efficient way to enter such a diffused market—they're borderless and a business can get a campaign going at zero to minimum cost," Marivic Espiritu, P&A managing partner and chief executive officer, said in a report on the survey released yesterday.

The Philippines is the fourth biggest exporter of labor in the world, next to China, India and Mexico. There are about 10 million Filipinos working abroad.

Businesses in the Philippines that use social media are mainly for advertising and for communicating with their customers. Other uses are for communicating with suppliers, communication with staff and recruitment.

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Nov. 22, 2011
43.460

STOCK MARKET
Nov. 22, 2011
▼ 18.00

Local stocks extend losses

Razon buys Active Alliance

By Paulo C. Montecillo

Benguet receives cash dividends from nickel unit

BENGUET CORP. Nickel Mines Inc. (BNMI), Benguet's nickel subsidiary, yesterday paid cash dividends of P32 per share to its parent firm.

In 2010, BNMI reported net earnings of P1.81 million from direct exportation of high-grade nickel ore in Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

Concurrently with its medium-term plan to transform the company from a direct ore exporter into processed nickel producer, BNMI is presently studying different processes using low-grade nickel to produce a higher-value material for export.

BNMI has signed a cooperation agreement with a Chinese institute engaged in research, design and development of thermal energy technology.

The operations of BNMI in Zambales is contributing to the social upliftment of the community by providing employment and community services such as scholarship programs, feeding programs, medical missions, livelihood projects and tree-planting activities. Since 2008, BNMI has planted a total of 48,100 trees in Sta. Cruz, Zambales, covering an area of 28.68 hectares.

SUBSEQUENT to Razon Jr.'s acquisition of the listed firm Active Alliance Inc. for P200 million, trading stocks of speculation that drove the company's share price up to record highs.

Investors that trade here on the company, however, may have been disappointed at the acquisition price of only about 19 per share, considering that AAI shares last closed at P76.

"That's the price you pay when you're speculating on a stock," said Lennie Lauson, head of research at Campos Lanuza & Co. Inc.

AAI shares were traded at as high as P102 per share in the last two weeks. Share prices soared to record highs from around P8 at the start of the month.

Razon was earlier rumored to be eyeing AAI to be used as a vehicle to take his newly formed gaming company, Bloomberry Investments, public via a backdoor listing.

On Tuesday, AAI voluntarily suspended the trading of its shares ahead of a major announcement regarding the company's ownership.

In its disclosure on Wednesday, AAI said it would be acquired by a Razon company, a little-known firm called Prime Metroline Transit Corp., for P200 million. The disclosure did not reveal any other details about Prime Metroline.

Razon's currently owns Manila-based United Industrial Container Terminal Services Inc., one of the world's largest port development.

"Five stockholders of AAI including Mercator Holdings Inc. agreed to sell 903 million shares," the listed firm said, making up 75 percent of the company's total capital stock.

Lauson said this just the value of the company at about P200 million.

"The highest turnover for AAI was P9.8M million. That's how much money was at risk this week," Lauson said. "A lot of people have been watching that stock and I imagine a lot of people have been burned," he said.

The trader said AAI's Lim Ah-doo will remain executive until Razon's revealed his plans for the firm. He said it was still unclear whether Razon would indeed use AAI to list Bloomberry.

Hoarder in the court

ISA OKI, Ozeis is trouble in the Supreme Court (SC) lately.

Now it seems that certain entities are turning their attention to the Hacienda Luisita case. Reports said at least eight justices already voted to direct the owners of Hacienda Luisita to distribute the land to the farmers. This was a clear signal to the Aquino (Noynoy) administration.

The Luisita sugar plantation happens to belong to the family of our leader (Benigno Simeon (Noynoy) Cojuangco side, meaning, on his mother's side, the late former President Corazon Aquino.

It seems, at least to our contacts in business, this is payback time for a group of Supreme Court justices. In effect, this group is out to be friends with the administration over the ouster of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Down here in my barangay, we know such a legal payback simply as revidesta. It does not matter well for the reputation of the high court, the ultimate arbiter in any dispute in the land, founder of all those truthfulness pure and simple involving business.

As we all know, except perhaps naive activist sister in the female, the administration and the Supreme Court came to blows just weeks ago over the case of the former first couple.

The TRO issued by Supreme Court against the Department of Justice—which, in effect, allowed the Arroyo to leave the country—created quite a stir in media. The Arroyos did not waste time taking advantage of the TRO.

Eventually, the Supreme Court relented, saying the TRO was not yet in effect, because the lawyer of the Arroyo couple did not comply with all the conditions set by the Supreme Court.

Down here, we talked that the group of Supreme Court justices who voted in favor of the TRO issuance had to the trusted security clearance from with the administration. Thus, it's payback time.

* * *

TO THINK, the Arroyo camp even filed a contempt case against Justice Secretary Leila de Lima for enforcing airport authorities to prevent the Arroyos from leaving the country, according to her of defying the TRO issued by the Supreme Court.

Immediately after the Supreme Court met on basic last Friday, rumors already flew on the Internet that the Arroyo camp failed to comply with the conditions imposed by the high court for the TRO issuance. It means the TRO was useless. Now would De Lima be in contempt of court?

It turned out that, according to Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno, the Supreme Court en banc voted all three on that day regarding the TRO. The first one upheld the issuance of the TRO. In the second voting, the Supreme Court en banc affirmed that the Arroyo camp failed to comply with the conditions of the TRO.

It seems that the Supreme Court had set three conditions for the TRO, namely, that the Arroyos can put a P1-billion bond, that they report to the Philippine consulate office in wherever they would be abroad and that they name a special power of attorney to whoever they choose to receive for them such things as court summons and other legal documents. The Arroyo camp did not do all three.

But then in a press briefing Supreme Court spokesperson Midas Marquez announced only that the Supreme Court en banc voted to uphold the TRO issuance, even saying that the TRO was "immediately executory"—whatever it meant.

In other words, the Aquino (Part II) administration was defying the Supreme Court. It was now between the executive and the judicial branches.

It was also reported, supposedly based on the press briefing, that the Supreme Court ordered De Lima to answer within 10 days why she should not be held in contempt for defying the TRO.

Here are the words of Sereno as blogged: "The court administrator was acting chief of the Public Information Office so he is hereby advised to be careful not to go beyond his role in such office. You said that he has no authority to interpret any of our judicial issuances, including the present resolution, a function he never had from the beginning."

In business nevertheless they have known that things like these happen in the judiciary all along.

* * *

SIGALUD of the relentless media attacks against increases in pump prices of fuel, members of Congress somehow feel they must amend the Oil Deregulation Law.

In fact, the Congressional Planning and Budget Department already submitted a report on the law suggesting that the amendments should improve "price monitoring."

For instance, the law may require oil companies to submit their books of accounts and other financial documents to the government price monitoring team, made up of the Department of Energy, the Department of Justice, and (this is the addition) the Commission on Audit.

Implication: the DOE and the DOJ have been doing their jobs in monitoring fuel prices.

Now the CPBD also noted the problem of fuel-smuggling. According to the Philippine Institute of Petroleum, the government foregoes at least P51 billion in revenue from fuel importation every year.

That money are really import a lot of fuel, amounting to hundreds of billions of pesos every year. Smuggled fuel accounts for a big portion of the supply. This means are imbalance.

The CPBD said the law must improve efforts to prevent fuel smuggling, such as the outright unconditional business permits of the smuggling oil companies. The report did not say anything on government policies such as taxation.

It is widely known in business that the main motivation for the massive smuggling of fuel is the 12-percent VAT, something that the original Oil Deregulation Law could not anticipate.

Fuel importation has almost zero tariff and duties. The smugglers actually try to avoid payment of the 12-percent VAT. Effect, the 12-percent VAT could mistake to play around with, where they are their pump prices.

In effect, it creates a price distortion in the market. What do the smuggler players do then to compete against the smugglers? They simply do knock-knock on their price. Which they do not actually have the retail price on their costs.

Somehow the law must address such a fact.

GDP growth seen . . .

From page B1

N. Pedemonte Jr. had said in two interviews that third quarter growth could be higher than four percent, mainly due to growth in the services sector.

Private economists were slightly more conservative with their outlook for the period as around 4 percent.

Malaysian GDP growth of 4.3 percent appears reasonable, Dr. Benjamin E. Diokno of the UP School of Economics said in a text message.

Declines said agricultural production may be lower than first estimate expansion due to a series of typhoons, while the manufacturing sector may have contracted sharply as reflected in weak exports.

"Construction, especially public construction, might still be seen reacting as a result of government underspending. The PPP (public private partnership) project has taken off. The catch up plan has yet to gather momentum," Diokno said.

Zak L. Yuson of the University of Asia and the Pacific also said that third quarter GDP growth could reach 4 percent.

"It would be between 3.5 to 4 percent. It's difficult for me to [give] a higher number," he said.

Yuson noted that private investments and other investment inflows into industry and services could lift the economy up despite poor agri, culture and exports showing. Bernardo.

With a report from Reuters

Local stocks extend losses

From page B1

consolidated to the uncertainty regarding the local market," a local brokerage firm said.

The index's losses were led by property giant Megaworld Corp. (0.57 percent), infrastructure firm Metro Pacific Investments (2.29 percent), holding firm JG Summit (1.06 percent), and telecom company DMCI (1.35 percent).

The market's lackluster performance also follows the downgrade of the World Bank's growth forecast for the country to a growth of just 4.3 percent, below the government forecast of as much as 5 percent.

Paulo C. Montecillo

Philippine Stock Exchange

Currencies

Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	dollar	43.7800	1.000000	43.7800
Japan	yen	0.5621	0.012840	0.5621
United Kingdom	pound	68.7100	1.569700	67.8674
Hong Kong	dollar	5.6420	0.128900	5.6420
European Union	euro	58.6600	1.339900	58.6600
Canada	dollar	43.7200	0.998800	43.7200
Australia	dollar	45.1700	1.031900	45.1700
Switzerland	franc	48.2000	1.101200	48.2000
Saudi Arabia	riyal	11.6700	0.266600	11.6700
United Arab Emirates	dirham	11.9200	0.272300	11.9200
Bahrain	dinar	116.0000	2.650000	116.0000
Kuwait	dinar	154.3000	3.525000	154.3000
Qatar	riyal	12.0200	0.274600	12.0200
Singapore	dollar	34.6000	0.790400	34.6000
Thailand	baht	1.4000	0.031900	1.4000
Taiwan	dollar	1.5000	0.034200	1.5000
South Korea	won	0.0400	0.000900	0.0400
Vietnam	dong	0.0021	0.000050	0.0021
Brunei	dollar	34.6000	0.790400	34.6000
Indonesia	rupiah	0.0050	0.000100	0.0050
China	yuan	6.8600	0.156700	6.8600
Denmark	krone	7.8600	0.179500	7.8600
Sweden	krona	6.4000	0.146200	6.4000
Mexico	peso	3.2000	0.073100	3.2000
New Zealand	dollar	34.6000	0.790400	34.6000
Norway	krone	7.8600	0.179500	7.8600
Russia	ruble	1.4000	0.031900	1.4000

Russia, PH form council to boost trade relations

Business, tourism promotion high on agenda

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PHILIPPINES and Russia are set to form the Russian-Philippine Business Council, in a bid to boost trade and economic ties.

In a statement, proponents of the RPBC said representatives of the two countries had signed a memorandum of agreement that will pave the way for the creation of the council.

"This synergic alliance will work hard for the business and trade development between Russia and the Philippines," Aimi Lopez Garcia, honorary consul of the Russian Federation in the Philippines, said in the statement.

Under the agreement between the two countries, promotion of trade, establishment of joint ventures, such as tourism and investments, will be undertaken.

"The RPBC will assist in the development and strengthening of mutually advantageous bilateral economic relations to businesses giving primary attention to medium-sized businesses," said George Petrov, vice president of the Russian Federation's commercial and trade department.

So far this year, bilateral trade between the Philippines and Russia stands at over $711 million. The figure is expected to hit a record of over $1 billion by the end of the year.

Major export products from the Philippines to Russia include aircraft parts, coconut, semiprocessed lumber, personal care products and banana chips.

The strengthening of the trade and economic ties between the two is expected to also boost Philippine exports of car parts, and processed and frozen food items to Russia.

The Philippines and Russia have had diplomatic relations for 35 years.

Proponents of the trade and economic deal between the Philippines and Russia deem it to be timely given increasing requests of the Philippines and other emerging markets in Europe because of the debt crisis in the Euro zone.

They expect the synergies between the Philippines and Russia to widen the market for Philippine-made goods.

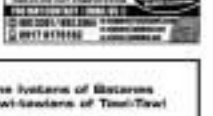
Trade officials said efforts to expand offshore markets for Philippine-made goods are necessary to counter the ill effects of the global turmoil on the country's export earnings and overall domestic economy.

Besides expanding markets, such as through trade deals, officials said it was also necessary to diversify exports products.

The country's major export product is electronics. In particular, the country exports intermediate electronic goods used for the production of consumer electronics, such as mobile phones and computers.

Economists said efforts to sell more export products other than electronics is prudent given the currently uncertain global demand for electronics products.

They said that in rough economic times, non-essential such as electronics normally suffer from decline in demand, unlike the essentials such as food.



PH gets German funding for peace efforts, Mindanao

By Rica T. Chichioco

GERMANY is set to provide the Philippines P9.12-million worth of financial and technical cooperation funds for peace building, social programs in Mindanao and the environment.

The National Economic and Development Authority said in a statement yesterday that the Philippines and Germany recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding on financial development cooperation between both governments.

Besides said that under the MOU, Germany will provide new allocations worth P279-million for bilateral technical cooperation, while around P605 million worth of financial and technical cooperation funds will be reprogrammed to four ongoing programs being implemented with assistance from the German Agency for International Cooperation or GIZ and the KfW Development Bank.

Of the P205 million reprogrammable funds, P186 million will be used for the LGU Investment Projects Phase II, Development and Peace Profiling in Mindanao, which provides a credit line for financing commercial infrastructure in Mindanao.

Some P20-million worth of reprogrammable funds from completed technical cooperation projects will be reallocated to three ongoing programs, namely the Microeconomic Innovations Programme for Social Security, Decentralization Programme and Study and Advisory Fund.

Apart from the new allocations and reprogrammed funds, the MOU said that up to P35 million would be made available for the Capacity Development Management, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety for the project entitled Building Momentum by Low Carbon Development in the Philippines and Turkey, Neda said.

Neda said the DOF was forged at the conclusion of the 2011 Philippines-Germany Intergovernmental Dialogue held on Nov. 15, 2011 at Neda.

Neda deputy director general Rolando G. Tungpalan led the Philippine Government in a dialogue with officials from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), led by Dr. Josef Hilden-brand, head of BMZ's Southeast Asia Department.

A real triumph or pyrrhic victory?

From the Waters of Batanes to the Tawi-tawians of Tawi-Tawi

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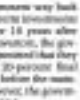
POINT OF LAW



Francis Lim

THE RULE of law is the hallmark of a democracy. The 1987 Constitution has provided an elaborate system of checks and balances to place restraints upon the three great branches of government in order to prevent abuse of power. This system is not without its flaws, but in real as it should be in any living constitution.

In our system of government, Congress makes the law; the Supreme Court interprets it; and the President and his subordinates execute it. Adherence to these constitutional mandates is essential to maintain law and order in society.

Almost a century ago, the eminent Supreme Court Justice Jose P. Laurel announced that during times of political excitement, the great landmarks of the Constitution are quick to be forgotten or marred, if not entirely obliterated.

The recent actions of the executive branch, more specifically its unrelenting penchant for defying Temporary Restraining Orders (TRO) issued by the Supreme Court, indeed show that there is wisdom in these words.

The perilous road toward the so-called "the real triumph for justice and accountability" began two months ago, when the Secretary of Justice stopped former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, from leaving the country despite the Supreme Court's TRO against the DOJ's Watch List Order (WLO) on the spouses Arroyo. The stated reason was that the former President was going to file a motion for reconsideration on the TRO.

Without meaning to condone the acts that gave rise to the WLO, this singular action has placed at risk the rule of law in our country as it placed the executive and judicial branches of government at direct odds with each other.

What is more disturbing is that this was not the first time that this administration has defied a TRO issued by the Supreme Court.

Last month, the Supreme Court issued a TRO in connection with the Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Certificates (PEACe) bonds issued by the government way back in 2001. These were long-term investments set to mature in 2011, or 10 years after their issuance. To entice investors, the government promised annually a tax-free interest rate of 14.5 percent to the 20-percent final withholding tax. A month before the maturity date of the bonds, however, the government reneged on its obligation.

Expectedly, unaware investors sought refuge from the Supreme Court which issued a TRO in their favor. But the executive branch acted as though there was no Supreme Court at all. This prompted the court to order the concerned government officials to comply, but they are yet to obey the TRO—yes, more than a month after the TRO had been issued by the Supreme Court.

I'm not even talking about executive orders or impositions of legislation passed by Congress or executive amendments of laws, a topic better reserved for another time.

On the contrary, one can only hope that this seemingly unrelenting penchant for defying the Supreme Court will not be the result in the years to come. Doing so only serves to erode the confidence of the people in our justice system. Its chilling effect on the administration of justice cannot be overemphasized.

To paraphrase the words of Richard Lovelace, we need people to understand the importance of the judiciary as a co-equal branch of government, for if people lose respect for the judicial system, their respect for law and order will go with it.

Indeed, the rule of law is the cardinal principle of democratic systems. It means that the law is supreme over any individual, or government official, and all must follow the law. As the famous saying goes it, "the law applies to all, or none at all." To borrow the words of the President, it applies to "a vendor or driver, teacher or garbage collector, cop or clerk, from the highest position down to the ordinary citizen."

But the President must go beyond his words by ensuring that the rule of law applies as well to his other spokespersons like his secretary of justice, secretary of finance and Commissioner of Internal Revenue. Respect for a co-equal branch—a constitutional precept long held sacrosanct in democratic jurisdictions—demands no less. Without this, our freedoms, democracy and security are in peril.

This President's political will to hold government officials accountable for their acts is admirable, but this noble "daang matuwid" governance philosophy should look at a much broader picture. It should illuminate ensure that it serves the higher good of restoring the confidence of the people in their government...all three great branches of it. It should never sacrifice the dignity of a co-equal branch of government, this is essential to maintain law and order in society.

Without law and order, any victory—if the form of putting the most guilty behind bars—will only be temporary or illusory because of the insidious erosion of the rule of law. Indeed, a mere pyrrhic victory, as some will say, and forward looking people cannot afford.

The immortal words of US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis present an appropriate parting thought in light of these recent events: "In a government of laws, the existence of the government will be imperiled if it fails to observe the law scrupulously. Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher for good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for the law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy."

(The author is a law professor at the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law. He may be contacted through jflim@ateneo.edu)

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MUSTARD SEED

PLDT SME Nation announces new Bossings

PLDT SME Nation, in partnership with Go Negosyo, announced its new roster of Bossings, the winners of MVP Bossing Awards 2011, during the Awards Night held yesterday at the Wireless Theater.

This year's speakers are Daniel Bossing Socorro Ramos of National Bookstore, Willy Tee Tee Ice Antolihao Group, Samie and Ian Lim for Automatic Centro/RUBI Furniture, Christopher Chan for Brooklyn Pinoh, Nelia Ang for GOV Shoes, Francis Juan for Chic Boy, Veterinary Tan for PHIN Inc., Dr. Rosalinda Ramirez for HBC Inc., Robert Tiam for Mad's Fried Chicken, Marlin Asistio for Rotonda Fitness Group, Austin Uy for Penhed International Corp. and 92 and Arsenio David for Safe-concept.

Special Awards were also given to members of Philippine Airlink, Phil and James Sangalang-Head, for Youth and Sports Development and Echolover's Choi Sun for Social Entrepreneurship.

The MVP Bossing Awards is PLDT's annual search for leaders of successful small and medium-sized businesses who display an entrepreneurial spirit and innovation.

"The entrepreneurial spirit is really the driving force for economic growth. A country could have significant resources, whether mineral, or forestry, or agriculture, but there will be a moment if no one is able to develop those," says PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan, who headed the judging committee together with PLDT executives and other industry experts.

Over 300 nominations were received across all sectors including restaurant, retails, industrial and manufacturing, retail trade and finance, travel and leisure, and service.

"The 12 new Bossings for this year have demonstrated that the value of entrepreneurship extends well and beyond the lives of the SME owners and his family. It creates job opportunities and livelihood for more people. We at PLDT SME Nation aim to provide these entrepreneurs with the support they need using technology to bring their business to the next level," says PLDT SME Nation SVP and Head Sue Lena Ahlers-Ang.

Now on its third year, the "Bossing Ako" campaign profiles entrepreneurs' success stories and how, through the use of information and communication technology (ICT), SMEs can be truly competitive with large local players and multinational companies.

"The inspiration behind the Bossing Ako campaign is to honor and herald successful Filipino small and medium entrepreneurs that they may serve as role models and inspirations to future Filipino entrepreneurs. For one not has to be born rich to become rich. Nor should he be satisfied as a robust and sustainable progressive small and medium entrepreneurial base," says PLDT Senior Vice President Rita R. Alberto.

Each winner received a Kenneth Cobonpue-designed trophy. The acclaimed furniture and industrial designer, an entrepreneurial icon himself, created a trophy featuring a man perched on top of a sweet, symbolizing the success story of winning over adversity.

All awardees will be part of the 2012 PLDT SME Nation Bossing Ako, a year long multimedia campaign (print, radio, online and events) to be rolled out next year.

For details on the MVP Bossing Awards, visit www.pldtsme-nation.com.ph/bossing-ako.

3M

3M Philippines (3MPI), Makati Business Chamber is looking for interested parties to become Authorized Distributors or Authorized Converters of 3M traffic safety product (SCOTCHLITE™ Reflective Sheeting), Pavement Marking Products) in selected areas of the Philippines. Companies who have existing and accreditation shall be limited to handle the distribution and conversion of quality road safety products in their assigned areas.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must have an existing business presence in their assigned marketing areas
- With a strong mobile and competent selling organization
- Willing to invest in new or existing specialized equipment for their organization
- Capable of conducting extensive and far-flung product demos

If you think your company is qualified to be a 3M Authorized Distributor or 3M Authorized Converter in Sign maker in your area, please submit a signed Letter of Intent to 3M Traffic Safety Systems Division, 7th Floor, Makati Business Center, 1150 P. Burgos Avenue, Makati City or thru the Box # 3MMBC.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS ON DECEMBER 15, 2011.

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF BULK INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT No. 11-09-001

The Philippine Regional Office-IX, through the Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2011 intends to apply the sum of ONE MILLION ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (Php1,150,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the procurement of Information Technology Equipment. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically be rejected at bid opening.

The Philippine Regional Office-IX now invites bids for the procurement of the following Information Technology Equipment:

Qty.	Unit	Item/Description	Amount
10	Unit	Computer Desktop Complete Package	500,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
2	Unit	Computer Laptop Complete Package	100,000.00
		TOTAL	1,150,000.00

Delivery of Goods is required on January 31, 2012. Orders should have completed within the 15 calendar days after receipt of Notice to Proceed. Contract shall be awarded to the bidder whose bid is responsive to the Bidding Documents, particularly in Bidding Requirements and Technical Specifications.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using 1-day Bidding/Evaluation/Post Qualification process as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens and corporations, partnerships or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to pertinent provisions of the IRR.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Philippine Regional Office-IX and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on December 1, 2011 @ 8:00 AM at Philippine Regional Office-IX, The Bulletin Place, 765 Governor Alvarez St., Tugbungan, Zamboanga City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00).

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Philippine Regional Office-IX, provided that Bidders must pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

The Philippine Regional Office-IX will conduct a Pre-Bid Conference on December 1, 2011 @ 9:00 AM at Philippine Regional Office-IX, The Bulletin Place, 765 Governor Alvarez St., Tugbungan, Zamboanga City, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

The deadline for submission of the sealed bids is on December 13, 2011 @ 8:00 AM at Philippine Regional Office-IX, The Bulletin Place, 765 Governor Alvarez St., Tugbungan, Zamboanga City and will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The Philippine Regional Office-IX reserves the right to accept, or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

DR. ELIAS B. ALBARADO
Philippine Regional Office-IX
The Bulletin Place, 765 Governor Alvarez St., Tugbungan City
Tel. No. (062)955-1111 loc 502 & 516
E-mail address: philrice.zamboanga@gmail.com
philrice.zamboanga@yahoo.com
philrice.zamboanga@pinoymail.com
Fax no. (062)955-1111 loc. 501 & 508
Website: www.philrice.gov.ph

Approved:
DR. ELIAS B. ALBARADO
Head, Administrative Office

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS

BSP-BAC AND BAWASS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the transaction project:

Name of Project / Brief Description	Supply, delivery, installation and configuration of the following hardware components for the Treasury Management System (TMS) Project to BSP Treasury and Domestic Wing, per BSP's Terms of Reference: Lot 1 – TMS Servers and Peripherals Lot 2 – Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS) Requirements Lot 3 – Additional Solid State Disks Requirements for Enterprise Storage
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Lot 1 – ₱15,240,112.00 Lot 2 – ₱1,000,000.00 Lot 3 – ₱1,370,000.00
Completion Period	Within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from date of receipt of the Notice to Proceed for the Treasury Components, which notice shall be issued within five (5) working days after receipt of copies of the executed contract.

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and complete their bids to prevent uncertainty as at least 50% of the ABC of the bid to be awarded. Bidding shall be conducted on a "Per Lot" basis. The Eligibility Check, Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Prebidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 15 NOVEMBER 2011 (from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. only) at 3rd Floor, Bid and Awards Committee Office, Room 313, 2nd Floor, Five Neorex Building, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Bo. Obrero, Quezon City, Metro Manila. Fax No. 708-7704/Fax No. 708-7720
2. Pre-Bid Conference	21 NOVEMBER 2011, 10:00 A.M.
3. Opening of Bids	30 NOVEMBER 2011, 10:00 A.M.
4. Bids Evaluation	Bidders subject to consideration will be announced
5. Post-Qualification	Period allowed is five (5) days or 120 C.D. No. 1996
6. Notice of Award	

The ITB and Detailed Requirements for Bidders may be downloaded from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the BSP website. Bidders who will download the bidding documents from the said websites are required to register with the BAC Secretariat Office and submit duly accomplished copies of the PhilGEPS Supplier's Data Form and payment of a non-refundable fee of ₱5,000.00 (lot 1), ₱3,000.00 (lot 2) and ₱4,000.00 (lot 3).

The BSP reserves its responsibility addressed to companies or corporate bidders for the expenses he paid in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, or abstain from awarding a tender, or to annul the contract process, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s), or to any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the grounds for BSP's action.

(Sgd.) **VICENTE C. AGUINALDO**
Vice Chairman

(PDI – November 24, 2011)

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635-0208 • 687-3164 • Fax 636-8238

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Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
Department of Justice
Manila

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Justice (DOJ), through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) is inviting interested parties to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Purchase of BIDS and AWARDS
Location	Department of Justice
Approved Budget for the Contract	₱ 4,650,000.00

The prospective bidder must have an experience of having completed, within a period of ten (10) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, at least one (1) contract that is similar to the contract to be bid, and whose value, adjusted to current prices using the NSO consumer price indices, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC to be bid. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Prebidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (RA) 9184 and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 dated 22 July 2009.

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
Issuance of Bidding Documents	24 November 2011 – 13 December 2011
Pre-bid Conference	01 December 2011
Opening of bids	13 December 2011
Bid Evaluation	13 December 2011
Post-Qualification	14 December 2011
Notice of Award	14 December 2011

Bid Documents and additional information may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat Office of the Director II, Administrative Service, 3rd Floor, DOJ Annex Building B, DOJ Compound, Padre Faura Street, Ermita Manila.

All bids to be submitted shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee, Room 313, 3rd Floor DOJ Main Building, Padre Faura Street, Ermita, Manila. All prospective bidders shall be charged a non-refundable bid fee in the amount of TWENTY EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS (₱ 28,000.00).

The Department of Justice reserves the rights to reject any or all bids, waive any defects therein and accepts the offer most advantageous to the government and assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or reasonably indemn for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

17 November 2011

RICARDO V. PARAS III
Chief State Counsel
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

NORTHRAIL

INVITATION TO BID FOR REPAIR AND RENOVATION OF MAINTENANCE DEPOT

1. The North Luzon Railways Corporation (NORTHRAIL) invites bids for repair and renovation of Maintenance Depot, Malolos, Bulacan. Bidders should have completed, within the past five (5) years from the submission date of the bid, a contract similar to the Project. The Bidder should have completed a contract that is similar to the Project, equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC.

2. The North Luzon Railways Corporation (NORTHRAIL) now invites bids for Repair and Renovation of Maintenance Depot Malolos Project in accordance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

3. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to pertinent provisions of the IRR.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the North Luzon Railways Corporation (NORTHRAIL) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on 24 November 2011 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (₱5,000.00).

6. It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the North Luzon Railways Corporation (NORTHRAIL), provided that Bidders must pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

7. A pre-bid conference shall be held on 01 December 2011 at 10:00 AM at the Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Five Neorex Building, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Bo. Obrero, Quezon City, Metro Manila, which shall be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

8. The deadline for the submission of bids is on 13 December 2011 at 10:00 AM at the Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Five Neorex Building, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Bo. Obrero, Quezon City, Metro Manila. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents. Late bids shall not be accepted.

9. The North Luzon Railways Corporation (NORTHRAIL) reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

10. For further information, please refer to:

Ms. Maria Cristina S. Arriola
Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
Northrail Project Management Office
3rd Floor, Five Neorex Building, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Bo. Obrero, Quezon City, Metro Manila
Tel. No. 708-7704/708-7720
Telefax No. 708-7704
Website: www.northrail.ph

(PDI – November 24, 2011)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Soils and Water Management
BSWM Compound, Visayas Avenue
Diliman, 1100 Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

(Supply, Delivery of Lot with Fully Installed with Electrical Components under the Agri-Pinoy Rice Program)

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2 (DA-RFU No. 2) proposes for the following project/s, to be funded under the Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2011 and intends to apply the sum of Twenty Million Pesos (₱20,000,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Supply, Delivery of Lot with Fully Installed with Electrical Components under the Agri-Pinoy Rice Program. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically be rejected at bid opening.

The Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2 (DA-RFU No. 2) now invites bids for the Supply, Delivery of Lot with Fully Installed with Electrical Components under the Agri-Pinoy Rice Program.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using 1-day Bidding/Evaluation/Post Qualification process as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens and corporations, partnerships or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to pertinent provisions of the IRR.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2 (DA-RFU No. 2) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on November 24, 2011 from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (₱5,000.00).

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2 (DA-RFU No. 2), provided that Bidders must pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on November 29, 2011 at 10:00 AM which will be open only to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

Bids must be delivered to the Regional Executive Director, Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2 (DA-RFU No. 2), Regional Compound, Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan on or before 10:00 AM of December 13, 2011. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The DA-RFU No. 2 reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

Ms. Rosario M. Albuquerque
Bidding Secretariat
Department of Agriculture-Regional Field Unit No. 2
Regional Compound, Carig Sur, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
Tel. No. (078) 846-0854
Telefax No. (078) 846-0854
Website: www.da.gov.ph

(PDI – November 24, 2011)

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Quezon Metro Manila, Philippines
Email: bldgcl_ceo@yahoo.com

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Mindanao, Koronadal City Branch
(083) 228-0444 • (083) 228-0444 • Fax: 228-0444

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DATANGAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.
Malpalon Del Norte, Cipar City

INVITATION TO BID

WHAT : Bidding for the Supply and Delivery of Distribution System Tools and Test Equipment
PR DR 1-102
WHEN : November 29, 2011 (Pre-Bidding Conference)
9:00 am - 2:00pm
DEADLINE : DECEMBER 2 Mon 2:00 p
Malpalon del Norte Lipa City

These Interested Bidders shall bring the following Pre-Qualification Documents:

1. Business Registration to CPC or SEC
2. Permit to Operate (Mayor's Permit)
3. Comprehensive Company Profile
4. Audited Financial Statements
5. Income Tax Return
6. Valid Licensing/Business/Authority/Mission's Certificate, etc.
7. Notarized authorization from the company being represented (for Representatives)

For Inquiries, Prospective Bidders may call 0917 (secretary, Ms. Angela P. Bautista at (043) 728-8207 email: 0917@yahoo.com.ph

Issued:

(Sgd.) JESUS ARVIN S. MARIKINA
President/Chief Executive Officer/Chairman

(Sgd.) ENGR. OCTAVIUS M. MENDOZA
Assistant General Manager

ATN Nov. 24 & 25, 2011

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Nov. 24 onwards, 9:00 AM- 6:00 PM

Antique Jewelry, Figurine Collectibles

Solid Mahogany/ 100% Lumber Heavy Duty

Imported furniture and home accessories

Solid Mahogany Dining Table, Dining Chairs, Display Curio Cabinet, Bedroom Set, Table Lamps, Mirrors, Tables & Sofa

Also check out sale on Baby's Furniture & Mother's Stuff - Bedroom & Office Desk & Chairs

MURPHY WORLD FURNITURE GALLERY

Solid Mahogany Furniture Inc. Subic City

Also sale on Mahogany Furniture Inc. Subic City

DATANGAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.
Malpalon Del Norte, Cipar City

INVITATION TO BID

WHAT : Bidding for the Supply and Delivery of Distribution Transformers and Aerial Bundled Distribution Line Equipment and Materials
PR DR 1-102
WHEN : November 29, 2011 (Pre-Bidding Conference)
1:00 pm - 2:00pm
DEADLINE : DECEMBER 2 Mon 2:00 p
Malpalon del Norte Lipa City

These Interested Bidders shall bring the following Pre-Qualification Documents:

1. Business Registration to CPC or SEC
2. Permit to Operate (Mayor's Permit)
3. Comprehensive Company Profile
4. Audited Financial Statements
5. Income Tax Return
6. Valid Licensing/Business/Authority/Mission's Certificate, etc.
7. Notarized authorization from the company being represented (for Representatives)

For Inquiries, Prospective Bidders may call 0917 (secretary, Ms. Angela P. Bautista at (043) 728-8207 email: 0917@yahoo.com.ph

Issued:

(Sgd.) JESUS ARVIN S. MARIKINA
President/Chief Executive Officer/Chairman

(Sgd.) ENGR. OCTAVIUS M. MENDOZA
Assistant General Manager

ATN Nov. 24 & 25, 2011

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
PCA Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Telefax No. 929-06-07 • 929-8874

Shellfish Bulletin No. 25
Series of 2011
21 November 2011

Based on the latest laboratory results of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and Local Government Units (LGUs), shellfishes collected at Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur; Bunawangan Bay in Zamboanga del Norte and Misamis Occidental; Mandulog Bay in Zamboanga; and Mati Bay in Davao Oriental are still positive for paralytic shellfish poison that is beyond the regulatory limit. Moreover, Bohol coastal waters (Barangays Lutang, Cahoy, Pilar, Balanga, Bilwang, Mantang, and Tawala) are now positive for red tide toxin.

All types of shellfish and Acetes sp. or alamang gathered from the areas shown above are NOT SAFE for human consumption. Fish, squids, shrimps, and crabs are safe for human consumption provided that they are fresh and washed thoroughly and internal organs such as gills and intestines are removed before cooking.

The following areas continue to be FREE from toxic red tides: coastal waters of Cavite, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Navotas, and Malabon in Manila Bay; coastal waters of Bataan, Aurora, Masinloc and Subic in Zambales; and Balayan Bay in Batangas; coastal waters of Lian, Nasugbu, Tuy, Calatagan, Balayan, Calaca, Lemery, Taal, Agoncillo, and Laurel in Batangas; coastal waters of Real, Infanta, General Nakar, Mauban, Tiaong, San Antonio, Sariaya, Candelaria, Dolores, Lucena City, Quezon, Pagbilao, Padre Burgos, Atimonan, Plaridel, Gumaca, Lopez, Calauag, Quezon, Macalelon, General Luna, Catanauan, Buenavista, Uyugan, and Jomalig in Quezon; coastal waters of El Salvador, Opol, Tagoloan, Villanueva, Jasaan, Kinoguitan, Lagonglong, Balingasag, Manticao, Binuangan, Initao, Naawan, Alubijid, Cagayan de Oro City, Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental; Bislig Bay, Lianga Bay, Lianga, Tagbina, Cagwait, Barobo, Hinatuan, Tago, Cantilan, Carmen, Surigao City, Surigao del Sur; Dapitan Bay in Dapitan City; Dumaguete City, Bacong, Dauin, Zamboanguita, Siaton, Sta. Catalina, Bayawan City, Basay, Mabinay, Manjuyod, Bindoy, Ayungon, Jimalalud, La Libertad, Tayasan, Vallehermoso, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental; Tambobo Bay, Bantayan, Madridejos, Santa Fe, Daanbantayan, Medellin, Bogo City, Cebu; Cabalian, Saint Bernard, Sogod, Southern Leyte; Maqueda and Villareal Bays in Samar; Ormoc, San Pedro, Concepcion, and Calingatan Bays in Leyte; waters in Biliran Province; Hinatuan, Bislig, and Lianga Bays in Surigao del Sur; Balite Bay in Mati, Davao Oriental; and Tagbilaran Lagoon in Bancol, Mariveles, Corregidor Island.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ASIS G. PEREZ
Director

BFAR Bulletin 24, 2011

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Diliman Quezon City, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos. 920-9600 loc 6705 extending all departments

INVITATION TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LANDBANK), through its duly and validly constituted BAC(s), invites supplier/contractor/service provider/consultant to bid for the following project:

DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget for the Contract	Value Added Tax (VAT)	Delivery Period
PR No. 2011-11-0	Php 3,000,000.00	Php 0.00	Within forty five (45) calendar days after receipt of Purchase Order

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, with an amount of at least fifty percent (50%) of the project/lot being bid for. Bidders should likewise submit as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "passed/failed" criteria. Post-qualification criteria shall be applied last shall be conducted.

A pre-bid conference relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the guidelines/ provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	November 24 to December 15, 2011
2. Pre-bid Conference	December 1, 2011 - 10:00AM Meeting Room, 6th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza 1598 M.H. Del Pilar cor. Dr. Quirino Streets, Malate, Manila
3. Opening of Bids	December 15, 2011 - 9:00AM
4. Bid Evaluation	December 15, 2011
5. Post Qualification	December 16, 2011
6. Notice of Award	December 21, 2011

Bid Documents will be available only at prospective bidders upon payment of the applicable non-refundable amount to the BAC Cashier.

The LANDBANK reserves its responsibility and/or to reject/accept, or to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to the contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

NAGA CITY LIGHTS UP WITH LIGHTING OF GIANT CHRISTMAS TREE

The Naga City skyline lit up as the city government of Naga held its traditional Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the Plaza Quezon in Centro Naga, which also serves as the kick-off to several upcoming festivities happening all over the city under "Naga Bonbon sa 22nd Philippine Advertising Congress," a support event to the 22nd Philippine Advertising Congress currently being held at the Camarines Sur Watersports Complex (CWC). The Christmas tree lighting was also made possible with the help of the Centro Naga Business Club. There are more activities lined up under "Naga Smiles" for the whole week, especially along the stretch of Magsaysay Sur Ig, which will be filled with party animals and hard rockin' music lovers and sweating showbizmen. "Naga Bonbon sa 22nd Philippine Advertising Congress" is a project of the city government of Naga, supported by Trio-III Advertising and The Next Step Events, Inc. that aims to provide Ad Congress delegates and guests with more-than-a-handful hospitality and to showcase the city's rich historical and cultural heritage and of course, the shopping fun through mouth-watering delicacies, exciting music and party-all-night events all over the city. Shown in photo are the fireworks display and Christmas tree lighting up the city. Also shown (inset, from top left) are members of the Mariners Polytechnic College Marching Band, Camarines Sur National High School Vocational Chorus, and the honorable Naga City Mayor, John Bongat.

NEW FIRE STATION

Columbian City Mayor Jay Vergara (middle) leads the ground-breaking ceremonies for the Bureau of Fire Prevention's (BFP) P1.2-million-fire station project in Columbian City. Vergara said the proposed BFP's fire station will be constructed inside the City Hall compound to complement the city government's one-stop shop services for occupancy and business permit applicants. Present during the ground-breaking thru were BFP officials headed by BFP Region I director Artie A. Barayuga.

OBITUARIES

Death Notice

JUAN ANTONIO FERMAT CAINTIC

late resident of Tuguegarao City, died on November 22, 2011 at the age of 63.

His body lies in state at their residence at Cita, Centerview San.

A Trisagion time will be held at the Holy Rosary Parish Church, Centerview, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan on November 25, 2011, followed by the interment at the Cemetery in Piat, Cagayan.

Survived by:

Virginia Caintic (wife)
Angelo Caintic (son)
Angelica Caintic (daughter)

"Death is when God calls us to heaven, but we call it when we die."

Psalm 116

We wish to express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who offered masses and prayers, visited and kept vigil, sent flowers, food and messages of sympathy, attended services and funeral rites, condoled with us and in many ways expressed their love and concern.

Let Tia Asay remain in our prayers.
MAY GOD BE WITH US ALL.

From the family of the late

TOMASA SORIANO FIGUEROA

Manuel Borneo Caintic

who was born in Cagayan de Oro
on October 26, 1946,

passed away on November 18, 2011
at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife, Emma del Rosario Caintic; children: Maki and Alberto and Manny and Ria; grandchildren Engel, James, Elijah, Jacob and Mariknow; brothers and sisters Fe, Tita, Andrew, Alberto, Divina, Bebot and Chook, family and friends request everyone to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Peter Memorial Chapel, Cagayan de Oro. Interment will follow after the 9 a.m. Funeral Mass to be held at the Forest Lake Memorial Gardens, Bolisa, Cagayan de Oro, on Saturday, November 26, 2011.

BUSINESS

Asia needs to 'recycle' forex reserves–Purisima

PH keen on bond issuance in yuan debt market of Hong Kong

BEIJING—Asian countries have challenges in finding ways to recycle their foreign exchange reserves within the region, the Philippine Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said on Wednesday.

"Money is available in Asia. Our challenge is how to recycle those reserves within Asia and how to develop our capital market," Purisima told a financial forum in Beijing.

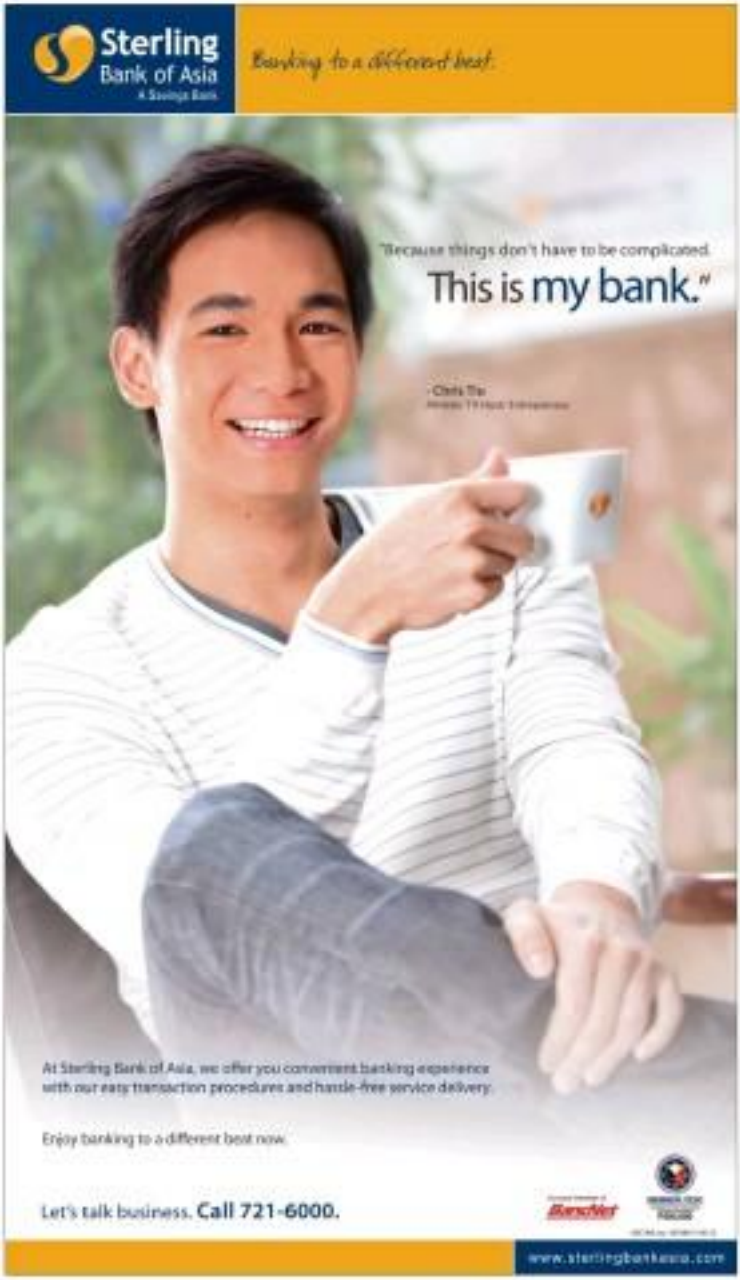
Asian countries have been diversifying their reserves that have been built up through trade and investment flows away from the US dollar, but such diversification has been hampered in part by the lack of a deep and liquid debt markets in the region.

General bankers in Hong Kong, the Philippines and South Korea have showed their intentions to diversify their reserves into yuan. Analysts say China has been steadily diversifying its reserves into other currencies other than the dollar, but about 70 percent of the holdings are now still in dollar-denominated assets, and a quarter in euro assets.

Asian countries, including China, Japan and South Korea, have entered a series of currency swap deals in a move to beef up their forex defenses in the midst of global uncertainties. Purisima also said the country was interested and looking at bond issuance in the offshore yuan debt market in Hong Kong.

China has used Hong Kong as its main testing ground in the past two years for boosting trade settlement in the yuan as Beijing slowly opens up its financial sector to the world.

China's central bank doubled the size of a currency swap with Hong Kong to 400 billion yuan ($63 billion) on Tuesday, a move aimed at giving the financial center a bigger relief valve to cope with rising demand for trade settlement in the currency. REUTERS



DOTC has final say on MRT-3

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications is still the ultimate decision-maker on the operations and maintenance package for the Edsa-Metro Rail Transit-3, said other members of the economic cluster, but "nothing stops the bidding" for the agency's recommendation.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, the de facto head of the Aquino administration's economic team, said he would rather not preempt what the DOTC would announce when it concludes its study on the MRT-3 contract.

"Let's wait for the outcome of their study and we will work from there," he said in a statement.

"The contract to operate MRT-3 is among the projects that we want to offer to the public, but the offer has been suspended pending the review of the DOTC," he added. "It will all depend on the outcome of their review."

In an interview on the sidelines of the Philippines-Korea Business Forum on Monday, Purisima told reporters that the O&M contract for the MRT-3 was now being prepared for bidding.

The MRT-3 O&M contract and a similar package for the Light Rail Transit Line 1 were supposed to be the first projects to be shortlisted off under the government's public-private partnership program.

A bid invitation had already been published, and interested parties had started preparations for bid submission, which was scheduled last July with some even keeping partnerships with foreign entities that had the technical capability to operate and maintain light rail transit lines.

The group of businessman Manuel Pangilinan had submitted an unsolicited offer to operate the MRT-3 and invest P300 million in upgrading the line's capacity and improvement of its facilities.

Mindoro Resources raising funds for Batangas projects

By Riza T. Olchondra

MINDORO Resources Ltd. of Canada said Wednesday it was raising up to C$16 million in funds through private placement.

The proceeds will be used to fund gold exploration activities in the Batangas province and ongoing working capital requirements, the company said.

The private placement will be offered as common shares in Canada and as Chess Depositary Interests (CDIs) in Australia, the Canadian miner said.

"Having successfully delivered on our key milestones in 2011, including the successful infill and extensive drilling programs at Southwest Bryson high-grade gold shoot, Lobo, we are focused on the next steps of building additional resources and completing a development scoping study on both the Lobo and Archangel resource projects in Batangas," company president and CEO Jon Dugdale said in a disclosure.

The company said it would sell up to 10.4 million common shares and CDIs via private placement to qualified investors at C$0.12 per share in Canada and A$0.133 per CDI in Australia.

In an earlier disclosure, Mindoro Resources said that, "as Mindoro is incorporated in Canada, CDIs rather than shares will be issued in Australia to comply with applicable laws in Australia."

Mindoro Resources named Lit Carmichael Pty Ltd based in Perth, Australia, and Jon Darvin Capital Ltd based in London as co-lead managers of the private placement.

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SUN CELLULAR POSTPAID

2011 SPEAKERS

SEN. RAMON "BONG" REVILLA JR.
SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

CHAIRMAN
Videogram Regulatory Board
July 2002–January 2004

PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Province of Cavite
February 1998 to June 2001

PROVINCIAL VICE-GOVERNOR
Province of Cavite
July 1995–January 1998
Director, PHILHISTORICAL PLACEUR FOUNDATION
Since 2003

National Member, PHILIPPINE MILITARY ACADEMY
CLASS 1980 Batch 3040

Honorary Member, ALPHA PHI OMEGA
INTERNATIONAL FRATERNITY
Since 2003

Honorary Member, PHILIPPINE GUARDIANS BROTHERHOOD, INC.
Since 2003

MR. JOSE T. SIO
Board Speaker

Jose Tan Sio is a director, member two executive committees and chief finance officer of SM Investments Corp. He holding concepts of SM Group and one of the largest conglomerates with interests in retail, mall operations, banking, property, and hotel and real estate. Sio is also board advisor of BDO Unibank and director of SM Keppel Land, Manila North Tollways Corp., Belle Corp., China Banking Corp., and Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp.

MR. ABDUL HAMEED ABDUL KADIR
President, MIA Federation of Accountants (MIA)
Qualified Certified Accountant, Malaysia
Senior Partner, TH Hyperformity Beyond Borders

Abdul Kadius, a Qualified Certified Accountant in Malaysia began his career in Coopers & Lybrand in 1971 and became the managing partner/chief executive of the firm in 1985. In 1998, he assumed the position of deputy executive chief of PricewaterhouseCoopers and has retirement in 2004. Aside from being the president of AIA, he is also the president of the Malaysian Institute of Accountants.

JEFF EUGENE T. BARTO
Chair, Board of Accountancy
Session Person, TSI Opportunities Beyond Borders

Mr. Eugene T. Matsui has decided his time to his profession ever since he got his license as a lawyer and as a Certified Public Accountant. For many years, he is an active figure whether as an official or committee member in the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX), Philippine Association of Management Accountant (PAMA), Association of CPAs in Commerce and Industry (ACPICI) and Philippine Institute of CPAs (PICPA). Rotary Club, Jaycees and Golf Clubs are his diversion since he got his professional affiliations.

JEFF CHRISTIAN DINO
Chair, SGV Global & Young
Session Person, TSI Opportunities Beyond Borders

Prior to being the chair of Scrip, Sarmo, Velez Auditing Firm, Atty. Dino became the head of the firm's tax division, managing partner and vice chair. At present, he is also a member of the Global Advisory Council and chair of the ASEAN Sub-Area Partners Forum. He is an expert in matters concerning international tax – inbound and outbound investments, business tax advisory and planning and tax controversy/litigation.

JUDITH G. LOPEZ
Chair and Senior Partner
Isla Lipana & Co., PwC
Session Person, TSI Opportunities Beyond Borders

As chair, Lee carries out her JUDITH leads management objectives, principles and professional staff to pursue the firm's objectives and business targets, and to ensure quality standards of client service. She sets the direction and goals for all lines of service, which are overseen by service delivery and tax services, and leads the planning and implementing the firm's practice in the market. She leads the firm's advocacy on good corporate governance, tax and other regulatory compliance, anti-corruption, corporate social responsibility, ethics and the PwC code of conduct applied in the firm and in professional engagements.

MA. VICTORIA C. ESPAÑO
Managing Partner and Chief Operating Officer
Punongbayan & Araullo Cebu Firm
Session Person, TSI Opportunities Beyond Borders

Marivic Espano has extensive experience in the field of taxation. She has provided comprehensive tax services to local and multinational clients, covering tax compliance, tax planning, corporate tax reviews, tax compliance reviews and assessments. She has also conducted tax due diligence reviews for significant acquisitions and privatization projects.

BENJAMIN REY B. FERNANDO
Makati Development Manager for Cloud Services, Microsoft Phils

Fernando is currently the business development manager for Cloud Services in Microsoft Philippines. His primary responsibility is to build the partner channel and go-to-market and set the various Microsoft Cloud Services in country. His is the single point of contact for all things cloud, direction, strategy, training, enablement, business development, licensing, channel readiness, etc.

WILSON SIA

Wilson P. Tan is the lead partner of the SGV Desk in the Philippines and leads the firm's Accounting Standards Group. He is also an active member of IFAC's Accounting Standards Group. He was recently appointed member of the Philippine Interpretations Committee, which assists the Financial Reporting Standards Council of the Philippines in establishing and interpreting financial reporting standards in the country.

RONALDO A. REVILLA, Ph.D.
Mapua College, Director, Dev

Dr. Revilla completed his Ph.D in Clinical Psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. He holds an MA in Economics from the same institution and an MS Psychology from Ateneo de Davao University. Presently, he teaches Psychology and Philosophy courses, both in the undergraduate and graduate levels, at Mapua College. He is certified specialist in clinical psychologist, he does individual counseling and group therapy. He also conducts training and team building workshops for various government, non-government and private institutions.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

DATE	ACTIVITIES	VENUE	ATTIRE
NOVEMBER 23, 2011 MONDAY			
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration	Lounge (Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Ctr. (SBECC))	Smart Casual
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Trade Exhibit	Lounge, SBECC	Smart Casual
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Courtesy Call to Mayor James Gordon Jr	Olongapo City Hall	Business Attire
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Courtesy Call to SBMA Chairman Roberto V. Garcia	SBMA	Business Attire
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Business Opportunities Seminar	Lounge, SBECC	Business Attire
1:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Chapter Presidents' Meeting	Subic Holiday Villas, Subic Bay Freeport Zone	Business Attire
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Presidents' Night Mixer (by invitation only)	Subic Bay Yacht Club, Royal Highway, SBMA	Casual/Sea
NOVEMBER 24, 2011 THURSDAY			
6:00 AM – 12:00 NN	Eco tourism / bike trail, marine safari & scuba adventure	Subic Bay Freeport Zone	Casual
6:00 AM – 7:30 AM	Exercise Exercises	Plaza Pilot Orbit Track, Rizal Highway, SBMA	Sports Attire
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration	Lounge, SBECC	Smart Casual
8:30 AM – 12:00 NN	Breakout Forums		
	Construction and Industry	Office 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Education	VIP 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Government	Plenary, Olongapo Convention Center	Business Attire
	Public Practice	VIP 2, SBECC	Business Attire
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Passing of Regional & Trade Banner	Lounge, Subic Bay Freeport Convention Ctr.	Business Attire
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	AMC Eucharistic Celebration	VIP 2, SBECC	Business Attire
2:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Opening Ceremonies	Plenary 1, SBECC	Philippiniana
	Invocation: Mr. Jose T. Sio, Chairman, SM Investment Corp		
	Keynote Speaker: Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Jr.		
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Technical Session 1 "Opportunities Beyond Borders"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Speaker: Mr. Abdul Hamid Abdul Kadir, AIA President		
	Atty. Eugene T. Matsui, Board of Accountancy Chairman		
	Ms. Judith G. Lopez, PWC, Chairman & Senior Partner		
	Atty. Jeffe D. Dino, SGV, Chairman & Managing Partner		
	Ms. Marivic C. Espano, Punongbayan Araullo, Managing Partner		
	Mr. Paul V. Sergado, APJA, SEC Philippines		
	Moderator : Mr. Justin M. Carretta		
6:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Regional Night: Showcase, dance and delicacy of Mindanao	Plenary 1, SBECC	Smart Casual / Mindanao
NOVEMBER 25, 2011 FRIDAY			
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Technical Session 2 "Risk Management: Prevention vs Cure"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Mr. William S. Bailey Parties, PWC Global Quality		
10:00 AM – 12:00 NN	Technical Session 3 "Ethics and IFRS"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Mr. Wilson P. Tan, Partner, SGV		
12:00 NN – 1:30 PM	Technical Session 4 "Forensic Accounting" (Multiple Intelligence)"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Dr. Ronaldo A. Mobilla, Ph.D.		
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Technical Session 5 "Game of Cloud Computing"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Mr. Fernando Rey B. Fernando		
2:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Technical Session 6 "Taking Cudgels for Nature"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Mr. Rafael M. Alunan III (Last Group Foundation Inc)		
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM	B R E A K / S I N G E E		
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	PICPA Awards Night and Fellowship: A Night of Food, Dance and Music	Plenary 1, SBECC	Jaya attire / Formal / Red & Black Night
NOVEMBER 26, 2011 SATURDAY			
8:00 AM – 12:00 NN	Technical Session 7 "Meeting the Regulators"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Hon. Teresita J. Herbosa, SEC Chairperson		
	Hon. Josefa G. Estiluna Jr., COA Commissioner-Operation		
	Hon. Nelson S. Kapa, BIR Deputy Commissioner Operation		
	Moderator: Atty. Alexander Cabrera		
12:00 NN – 1:30 PM	Technical Session 8 "The Values of a True Professional"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Atty. Gilberto G. Teodoro, Jr.		
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Technical Session 9 "The Recent Developments in Taxation"	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire
	Resource Speaker: Atty. Victorino C. Mendoza		
2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	Closing Plenary	Plenary 1, SBECC	Business Attire

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MR. MANUEL MONDEJO ALONZO III
President, Lopez Group Foundation Inc.
Speaker: "PPP: Riding the Tailwinds from Nature"

Aside from being the president of the Lopez Group Foundation Inc., Alonzo is currently the director of Bambi Inc. and Pepsi-Cola Products Inc., trustee of the Asian Institute of Management, Ateneo de Davao University, and La Salle University, elected member of the Management Association of the Philippines and a fellow of the Institute of Corporate Directors. He is also currently a member of the boards of various civic organizations.

ATTY. NELSON M. SOPE
Deputy Commissioner Operations Group 300
Exclusive Picture: 737 Meeting the Regulators

Atty. Nelson M. Sope is a CPA lawyer by profession. He is the Bureau of Internal Revenue's deputy commissioner assigned in the Operations Group since 2007 and has been in charge of the ISR OPLAN 600-SEED Project. Prior to this, he served the bureau as regional director, Revenue Region No. 8, Makati City; chief of staff, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Operations Group; technical assistant, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Legal and Inspection Group; group supervisor, Revenue District Office, Caloocan City; assistant chief, Legal Division, Revenue Region San Pablo City; technical assistant, Office of the Commissioner and as revenue enforcement officer.

ROBERTO E. ESPAÑO JR.
Commissioner, Commission on Audit
Exclusive Picture: 739 Meeting the Regulators

Roberto E. Español Jr. joined the Commission on Audit (COA) in 1997 and over the years he has served in several positions in the agency. As a member of the Commission Proper (COP), the highest policy-making body of the commission, he decides cases on money claims, appeals on disallowances/suspensions/charges, request for relief from money and property accountabilities, requests for write-off/condonations, etc., determines policies, promulgates rules and regulations, and prescribes standards governing the performance by the Commission of its powers and functions, and, assists in the general administration of the Commission upon proper delegation by the chairman.

CESAR THOMAS E. BUENAVIA
Executive Director and Exchange Commissioner
Exclusive Picture: 737 Meeting the Regulators

Prior to his appointment as the chair of the Philippine Competition and Exchange Commission in April 2011, Atty. Tereso J. Tiechoco was a senior partner and the first female managing partner of the Angara Abello Concepcion Regala & Cruz Law Offices (ACCRALAW) where her varied and expertise as litigator were fully enhanced, having been the head of the ACCRA's prestigious Law Department. She was cited as one of the top three litigation lawyers in the Philippines, by the International Financial Law Review in its publication "Guide to the World's Leading International Business Law Firms 2001 Edition". More citations of her legal excellence have appeared in the Asia Pacific Legal 500 ("The Guide to Asia's Commercial Law Firms and in the International Who's Who of Regulatory Commentators and Lawyers among others.

ATTY. GILBERTO CUSIANGCO TEODORO JR.
Speaker: "The Nature of a Trial Professional"

A lawyer by profession, Atty. Teodoro has been a partner at SP Montoya Law Offices and had been admitted to the Bar State of New York, USA. He also topped the Philippine Bar Examination in 1988. He is an active member of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and of the alumni associations of Harvard and the University of the Philippines. Aside from being a lawyer, Atty. Teodoro is also a seasoned pilot with rating in jet jet 31. He did as a government official and for 2000 never he decided to run for president. He was the Secretary of the Department of National Defense until 2006. Prior to this position, Atty. Teodoro served his constituents as the First District of Cebu as its representative in Congress. He also served as Cebu City Mayor for three terms from 1992 to 2001. He was conferred several awards including the Philippine Legion of Honor - Degree of Commander by HE PGMA on 16 November 2009 and other numerous awards.

ATTY. VICTORINO V. ABAGEN JR.
MANAGING
Speaker: "TIP The Income Development of Taxation, Part II"

A CPA lawyer by profession, Atty. Victorino Manalaban is a partner in Promogbayan & Arcello CPAs and the head practice of the VC Manalaban & Associates Law Office. He had spent most of his years in tax practice. Victorino is a veteran civil servant as he served in several key positions with the Bureau of Internal Revenue and 15 years as an active private tax practitioner dealing with tax assessment and refund cases before the Court of Tax Appeals. He wrote several books and articles about taxation and had engaged in the academe by teaching accounting, taxation and tax-subjects. In the 2008 Bar Examinations, he was the bar examiner for Taxation. He is presently a member of the CTA Committee representing the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, lecturer at the University of the Philippines, Pre-week/Bar reviewer at San Sebastian Recoletos College of Law, member, committee to give unofficial answers to bar examinations on Taxation, UP Law Center, Quezon City.

MR. PAUL GARVEY
Business Partner, ITS / Square Facilities
Network Services

Paul Garvey is a senior level executive with extensive experience in working with business leaders, board of directors, and non-solo advisors as well as building and managing world-class teams. Business growth and high performance for team development in different cultural environments are among his expertise's passion. At present, he's one among the chief focus countrymen who delivers and shares their expertise to companies here in the Philippines. At ITS, he managed teams covering multiple subsidiaries with over 14,000 employees in the Philippines. His delivery missions include mainframe and software sales, consulting, strategic outsourcing, IT sourcing and maintenance solutions as well as business process outsourcing for commercial and national accounts.

2011 OUTSTANDING CPAs

HALL OF FAME

This award is conferred to a CPA who has or had given most of his time and best efforts to the promotion and advancement of the accountancy profession in the Philippines. He or she was already recognized for his/her excellent performance as a CPA in his/her own sectoral expertise.

ATTY. ABELARDO T. DOMONDON

POST HUMOUS AWARD

RICARDO T. DANGAS JR.

LUPO S. RAMOS

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PETRA SANTOS AMPARADO

VICTORIA L. ANGELES

ESTRELLA S. ANDRES

DOMINADOR A. BARRION

TOMAS H. LIMINA

CELSO P. VIVAS

DONATO P. DANAO

DR. ANTONIO P. TICSON

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

CYNTHIA A. MOLINA

EDUCATION

MARISSA H. BALDECIR

COMMUNITY SERVICE

GIOVANNI C. ALIPOOD

GOVERNMENT SERVICE

LITO Q. MARTIN

PUBLIC PRACTICE

MA. VICTORIA C. CERVANO

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CHALLOMER A. MATERO

INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LEONARDO L. NATIVIDAD JR.

OUTSTANDING PICPA MEMBERS

LUZON

EDNA BARRETO

VISAYAS

EDITA T. URETA REYES

MINDANAO

NOVITA R. PALMAS

NCR

VIOLETA J. JOSEF

PICPA: Best way forward

By Josefina G. Cruz
PICPA National President

The yearly pursuit of greater achievements by the country's premier association of accounting professionals comes at the time when a new theme banners the ensuing fiscal year. This FY 2011-2012 is auspicious as it is inspiring because we dedicated ourselves "Towards a Stronger PICPA: (in) Solidarity, Service, Social Responsibility". We adopted this theme as a declaration of our commitment to remain focused on three main thrusts: unity of vision, excellent member services, and socially responsible sharing, so that we can meet the expectations of our members and the communities we serve.

Today we come face to face with our members from around the country to participate in the Annual National Convention in my home region of Central Luzon, specifically Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Olongapo City May 31 to 06 are the dates we have been anticipating to experience the warmth of friendship and strong fellowship of a diversity of members with varied interests - but bonded by a common goal to belong to an elite professional organization - that is PICPA. I am grateful that this day has come.

International goodwill

We continue our active membership in the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants (CAPA), and the ASEAN Federation of Accountants (AFA) for a very important reason. That is to embody the ultimate goal and uphold our vision as the nationally recognized organization of certified public accountants by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

At the IFAC, the global organization of the accountancy profession, PICPA is counted among 164 member bodies in 125 countries that protect the public interest by encouraging high quality practices by the world's accountants. Like the rest of IFAC members, PICPA members are found in public practice, commerce and industry, government service, and academe. This diverse constituency is the same throughout, but PICPA can rely heavily on the influence and work of IFAC to address local national issues in the practice of accountancy.

PICPA is the cornerstone of both CAPA and AFA. It was in the Philippines that both international accounting organizations were founded through the initiatives of PICPA Presidents during their time. The idea of CAPA came in 1957, but it was only in 1976 that CAPA was formally established. Its mission is to provide leadership in the development, enhancement, and coordination of the accountancy profession in the Asia Pacific region and promote harmonization through the adoption of international accounting standards. CAPA has a membership of 33 accounting organizations in 24 countries.

AFA was established in 1977 for the further advancement of the aims of the profession in the region to establish an ASEAN philosophy on the accounting profession through the joint endeavors of ASEAN accountants. While each country has differing education and competency assessment systems, PICPA shares a strong advocacy to preserve best practices and ensure that all accountants are trained and assessed to the same high level. The disparity in skills level is addressed by providing an avenue for dialogue to raise awareness on the issues. AFA's current membership comprises of all 10 ASEAN member countries.

Our international membership obligation

Our membership in IFAC carries with it our commitment to comply with the seven Statements of Membership Obligations (SMOs) required of all IFAC members. On Aug. 30, 2011, we submitted to IFAC our Action Plan on these SMOs, which was duly approved and published to the IFAC website. This Action Plan reflects our desire to close our foreign counterparts that we present the education and competencies required of global certified public accountants. We have reported on our implementation schedule of action plans for SMOs on quality assurance, education standards, auditing standards, ethics, public interest accounting standards, investigations and discipline, and financial reporting standards.

As the national association of certified public accountants

Through the years, PICPA has demonstrated its commitment to attain its objectives through increased focus on members' service, high performing projects that promote professional stature and prestige of accounting professionals, relevance in socially responsible programs and advocacy. PICPA's program of activities are designed to project a strong, dynamic and unified organization of accounting professionals employed in the four sectors of commerce and industry, education, government, and public practice.

As a major player in the professional community, PICPA is a visible and cooperatively functioning CPA organization. It has made presentations with the Board of Accountancy (BOA), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Commission on Audit (COA), and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to coordinate, assist, and share resources in promoting best practices in accounting and auditing for public interest.

Continuing Professional Education (CPE)/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Initiatives

The PRC CPE/CPD Council on Accountancy and PICPA CPE/CPD Council have played a very significant role in promoting professional development and training in PICPA. Following the policies of the Joint Council, PICPA took the lead as CPE Provider No. 001. PICPA trainors have been deployed to the chapters to assist them in organizing their CPE seminars. Training programs are developed at the PICPA National Training Office and submitted for CPE accreditation with the Joint Council. These programs are offered to members both at the National Office and in the chapters.

The CPE on the Road is a landmark program that has been increasing in demand. Chapters who are qualified to avail of CPE on the Road are able to enjoy the benefits of CPE. The more popular topics are the Philippine Financial Reporting Standards (PFRS), Philippine Standards of Auditing (PSA) Taxation, Professional Ethics, Auditing of Cooperatives (in partnership with the Cooperative Development Authority), SEC Updates, and Good Corporate Governance.

Our continuing quest for excellence

PICPA's continuing quest for excellence is a vision that inspires us to motivates. This is evident in the comprehensive program we have for the 66th Annual National Convention. If we are satisfied in the goals we have set for the year, it is because we have teams of dedicated members who are willing to take on added responsibilities, deeper involvement in the issues of PICPA, and more value added to the services being rendered to all members in all sectors in all regions and chapters. Indeed, achieving the goals of PICPA means that every PICPAn must work together not just for the benefit of the outstanding Regions and Chapters, but more importantly for the benefit of those who need PICPA's assistance most urgently: those Chapters that are yet developing, and the members who do not have ready access to the services offer at the PICPA National Office.

The great Henry Ford famously declared: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." It has long been acknowledged that PICPA continues to move forward because its officers, directors and members have consistently worked as a team. Teamwork divides the task and doubles the success, and PICPA is certain to succeed as the accredited professional organization (APO) of CPAs because together, despite all the obstacles and challenges the future may bring, PICPAns from all sectors will continue to make the Institute a solid and outstanding organization for all its members. This, by far, is the best way forward.

2011 National Board of Directors

2011 Photos Du Monde

Towards a STRONGER PICPA

MORE than ever, the role of the CPA today has dramatically evolved and has become complex. His service is greatly sought. The Filipino CPA must step up as competitive contenders to heighten in the global arena. He must broaden and strengthen his competencies in order for him to be recognized and to be one of the in-demand and respected professionals within and beyond national borders.

PICPA has been a bastion of professionalism and integrity for the past so many years. The pillars with which its foundation rests have been upheld with utmost commitment to the highest professional and ethical standards, as well as openness to the call for being relevant at all times to the society and for keeping the Filipino CPA globally competitive. This is PICPA's strength. This is also PICPA's challenge to be stronger.

For PICPA year 2011-2012, the Institute will focus on three main thrusts which are deemed to lead it into becoming a strong and formidable organization.

Solidarity

More than a professional organization, PICPA, with all its members is an evolved kernel of a TEAM. We believe that we can achieve more if we are cohesive and collegial in forming our efforts and resources in areas needing relevant attention. We will encourage partnerships and collaboration between and among chapters, regions and sectors in pursuing projects and ultimately, the common good. PICPA should be speaking a singular language understood and upheld by its members.

Service

PICPA should be an embodiment of SERVICE. As all members are the key asset of the Institute, their professional well-being is top priority of the new leadership. Membership support will be enhanced and made readily accessible. Continuing professional development initiatives will be pursued to strengthen members' competencies and reinforce their professional edge and relevance. Fellowship and networking programs will be conducted to keenly rationalize it. More than ever, the Institute will exert extra effort to be at the service of its members at all times.

Social Responsibility

PICPA should be at the forefront of NATION BUILDING. We believe that our responsibilities extend beyond the accounting profession. We will espouse a deeper sense of social responsibility to the various stakeholders that we serve. We will launch projects that will create and introduce changes geared towards improving the quality of life of the people in the community where we dwell. It is the hope of the Institute that the consciousness of working for the common good in all aspects and at all times will be its unique contribution of humbly giving back to society.

The path to a STRENGTHENED PICPA is a path founded on excellence, organizational harmony and vision. It is a path strewn with blocks of challenges as well as morsels of hope that the road ahead will be paved with good and noble intentions and ultimately, success in every undertaking. This will make PICPA a stronger organization to reckon with as the century unfolds.

MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

MISSION

PICPA is the globally recognized and integrated national organization of Filipino Certified Public Accountants in all sectors.

Its mission is to enhance the integrity of the accountancy profession, serve the best interest of its members and other stakeholders, and contribute to the attainment of the country's national objectives.

These can be achieved through a responsive organizational structure, committed leadership, effective professional development programs designed ahead with the state-of-the-art technology, strict implementation of professional ethics, promotion of high standards of accounting education and advocacy of and participation in relevant national issues.

VISION

To be a strong, dynamic and unified professional organization of highly respected, world-class and morally committed certified public accountants, worthy of esteem of the Filipino people.

CORE VALUES

PICPA adheres to the highest ideals of professionalism and demands same in service and upholds the following:

Integrity

We advocate the TRUTH and conduct ourselves at all times with honesty, uprightness and adherence to sound moral principles, thereby gaining the respect of the public.

Professional Excellence

We are committed to render excellent professional service to every member and to the profession.

Innovation

We seek and apply new ideas to improve performance. We continuously promote creativity, flexibility and resourcefulness amidst constant change.

Discipline

We actively adhere to the code of professional conduct promulgated by the Institute while promoting the highest spiritual, moral and ethical standards.

Teamwork

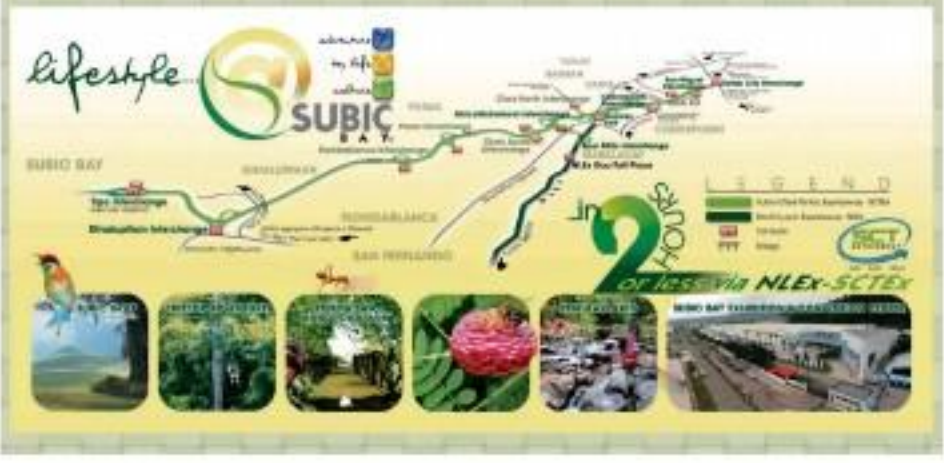
We uphold a strong bond of unity, working in the spirit of harmony and commonality.

Social Responsibility

We commit ourselves to a lifelong, active and devoted focus of duty to society.

Commitment

We bind ourselves to uphold these ideals to ensure the accomplishment of PICPA's Mission and attainment of PICPA's vision.



Filipino CPAs go global

From page B6.1

redevelopment happening in the profession.

Manuel Mapoy, chair of the annual national convention and assistant regional director of the Bureau of Internal Revenue-Makati, said that this year's gathering of CPAs would be as memorable as the past conventions because the fellowship nights and sessions will be as much fun and more challenging.

With the theme "Solidarity. Service. Social Responsibility: towards a Stronger PICPA," the convention aims to make a statement of how organized PICPA is and that the members hold a firm responsibility to serve.

"We invited speakers who are experts in their field such as former Tourism and Interior Secretary Eduardo Ermita," Mapoy said.

There will be a Business Opportunities session that will benefit the participants. The second day will be about several forums on Commerce and Industry, Education, Government, and Public Practice. A regional and trade exhibit also happens on the second day. Other plenary sessions will discuss updates on what is new in taxation which is one of the most important aspect in the profession.

AMC chairpersons Cordero, Mapoy and Bautista

Party nights

There is going to be not only one but several party nights all throughout the convention.

The "Presidents' Night-Mabuti Co Pit" is by invitation only for regional chapter chairs and other officers. The second night will have the "Regional Nights (Samson, Cebu and Glory of Broadway," one of the most anticipated events because participants will have production numbers. On the third night, "PICPA Awards Night and Fellowship: A Night of Food, Dance and Music (Red and Black Night)" is where the real party begins.

The convention is also about leisure as there will be activities at Sonny Field, sweepstakes and other outdoor activities.

Mapoy said that one of the highlights is the unveiling of outstanding CPAs. He said that Filipino CPAs are comparable with others in the profession but PICPA won't stop in keeping up with the changing global climate.

"With this convention and our regular sessions, we will try to improve further the profession so our members will see more opportunities," Mapoy said.

PICPA more than you know

From page B6.1

assured compliance on the said limitation then it revised its By-Laws followed by a revision on its organizational structure in December 1980. All conditions being set forth and complied with, PRC commissioner Julio D. Francia declared that inauguration of the Accountancy Profession was already accomplished.

The Accountancy Act of 2004 or Republic Act 9298 formally recognized the four sectors of the Accountancy Profession, namely Government and Industry, Public Practice, Education/Academe and Government. Also recognized was the profession's Geographical groupings namely Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and National Capital Region. PICPA, once again amended its By-Laws and changed its organizational structure to comply with RA 9298.

PICPA's participation in the international organizations started in 1980s when Carlota P. Valenzuela took a seat in the International Federation of Accountants with Washington Sycip as the president of this international organization. Eduardo Villanueva, another figure in PICPA became president of CAPA. In 1968, the 6th ASEAN Federation of Accountants Conference was hosted by PICPA. The 9th CAPA Conference was held in Manila during the presidency of Rebe-Ai S. Gonzalez.

The establishment of the Accounting Standards Council in 1982-1983 was one of the many accomplishments of the prominent figures in PICPA. The ASC was mandated to implement and raise the standard of the profession by establishing its guidelines. This move was supported by the regulators such as BIR, Bangko Sentral and PSE. The Auditing Standards and Practices Council was also created in the 80s to implement and spread nationwide the acceptance of the auditing standards and practices. To provide the CPAs comfortable learning venue for their standards, the PICPA Training Center was created in cooperation with the SGV Foundation and PICPA Foundation.

To make a continuous improvement endeavor to the Accountancy Profession, the leaders of PICPA, each on his own term consist of sectoral ad regional councils. Various changes in the four sectors of the accountancy practice were implemented including the revision of the Accountancy Curriculum and adoption of the International Accounting Standards, Philippine Accounting Standards and the Philippine Standards of Audit.

Through the years up to the present, the leaders of PICPA act towards a stronger Accountancy Profession... towards a stronger PICPA through SOLIDARITY, SERVICE to members and SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Business Opportunities at your Doorstep

Welcome the KaTeam

Learn about the various internet services and other programs for the minigrocer through the PLDT KaTeam.

The KaTeam has been visiting minigroceries to introduce to them the PLDT KaAsenso products and services.

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PLDT KaAsenso spreading the word of entrepreneurship, house-to-house

Minigrocery entrepreneurs or minigrocers are no strangers to challenges. Among the common issues they face include dealing with competition, effectively reaching their markets, raising enough capital to support their business, and maintaining the right balance between work and family.

Addressing these concerns is PLDT KaAsenso—a program created to develop the home micro-business sector through offering customized solutions for the minigrocers. This program deploys a group of young entrepreneurs dubbed as the KaTeam. Their mission: to introduce PLDT KaAsenso's programs, tools, and services that address the needs of every minigrocery for connectivity, financing, education, networking, and value creation—the very pillars PLDT KaAsenso is built on. The KaTeam visits minigroceries house-to-house, on a nationwide scale to find out face-to-face what particular requirements they have and address these with a wide range of business programs and tools custom-built to empower Filipino minigrocers.

The minigrocers in need of reliable communications. The KaTeam offers premium business Broad and Wireless Landline services with nationwide coverage, enabling them to reach a wider market. Now, they can call or service their customers anytime, anywhere in and outside the country.

The KaTeam also provides internet packages that enable minigrocers to maximize the web as a marketing and management tool for more efficient business operations. They can also take full advantage of this connectivity with discounted bundled PCs made more accessible through KaAsenso's PC Assessment Offer. In this way, each KaAsenso service or offering is aimed at elevating minigrocers' every-day business management. Whether any marketing by PLDT KaAsenso finds itself in Pasay's Eli Kung Lunch pan-Asian serving comfort food Sinco Grocery or Sinco Marketing Auto Shop. The KaTeam visited all, showed minigrocer and the latter availed of a KaAsenso internet plan with Call All, Nippon, Isabi mobile in Cebu, collaborating on their to office or in family by groceries. Manalo's ing-manufacturing Fuji Speed Iron ore construction site on piece or mga iron to

Expand the KaTeam to visit your minigrocer or may kay-kay sites around the Philippines.

Isagay supra-research sila' ke sad. Through the KaTeam, HC Arsenio also learned about the numerous other services offered by PLDT KaAsenso for the improvement of his business. He said, "Makakatulong talaga'to sa ang mga maliit na business natin' ng simple ay response nang partner sa PLDT KaAsenso."

The KaTeam also presents the KaAsenso Agent Program through which interested nonminigrocers can apply and earn as much as P23,000 per month selling various PLDT products. The KaTeam promises education as a business tool as well and introduces KaAsenso Educasyon—a partnership with prestigious educational institutions in providing at cost-to-free business training, serving minigrocers with the right information and skills needed to keep them on track towards success.

PLDT KaAsenso recognizes the importance of the minigrocers. Through the KaTeam, they are reaching out to a legion of independent mostly home-based business owners all over the Philippines. These minigrocers have found a true partner, a resource that can effectively assist in their small business needs, ensuring that all minigrocers will find the path to their success.

To schedule a meeting with the KaTeam and learn about the tools they offer by calling the PLDT KaAsenso Hotline 811-3030. You may also visit pldt.ph/KaAsenso-com.ph or like us on Facebook.com/PLDTKaAsenso for updates.

PICPA more than you know

The Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants is a registered non-stock corporation and is the accredited professional organization (APO) of CPAs by the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) and had been awarded twice as PRC Most Outstanding APO from among other professional organization.

PICPA was founded in November 1919 by a group of illustrious pioneers in the accounting profession: Enrique Cuguat, Santiago dela Cruz, Proceriano Enriquez, Jaime Hernandez, Felipe Dilada, Ramon del Rosario, Antonio Sanchez, Jose Reina, Antonio Tuby, Clemente Lim and Jesus Zabarte, William W. Larkin, holder of CPA Certificate No. 1 was its first president. It was during his term that the Constitution and By-Laws was created. The organization was then known as the Philippine Institute of Accountants.

In 1947, under the leadership of Proceriano Enriquez, the First National Convention was held. It was also during this time that the first "Newsette" was published. With Washington Swiss as the helm in 1951, 68 firms, PICPA chapters were established. The first were the chapters of Iloilo and Negros Occidental followed by Pangasinan and Davao chapters. The Accountant's Journal was also revived with Swiss, Tuby and Hernandez serving in the editorial board. This journal was distributed not only in the Philippines but to accountants' organizations abroad. This paved the way for PICPA to be known in other countries.

1953 became the women's year in PICPA. Helen E. Gutierrez, the first lady CPA became the first lady president of the Institute. She initiated the participation of women in PICPA.

Provincial chapters started hosting the Annual National Convention in 1958 during the presidency of Fausto E. Baraoia. The first provincial chapter host was Cebu Chapter.

In 1964, then president Severin D. Narciso organized the Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants (JPIA). Also during his presidency, the Institute's name was revised from Philippine Institute of Accountants to Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

The celebration of Accountancy Week started in 1966 during the term of Jesus S. Castro. Its executive order was issued by the President of the Philippines to recognize the importance of the accounting profession for the progress of our country.

1970s was a remarkable year for PICPA's existence. The construction of PICPA house was initiated in 1970 through the concerted efforts of then president Carlos J. Valdes and past national presidents Leonardo Cabanero, Lauro Abrahan and Juan de Villa, Jr. On Oct. 2, 1973, after being compliant with the requirements of PD No. 223, PICPA was awarded the Certificate of Accreditation No. 6 by then PRC chair Eric Nebia. This distinction recognized PICPA as the sole professional organization of CPAs in the Philippines. It likewise gave PICPA the responsibility to integrate all CPAs from various sectors in the country. The integration of the Accountancy Profession was ruled out when the Professional Regulation Commission passed Resolution No. 306 on July 12, 1984 as amended by Resolution No. 142 dated March 4, 1987. Then, PICPA

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Vicvic Villavicencio elevates, once again, the buffet experience

By Jen Rojas
Lifestyle Editor

More reason to 'eat all we can' with theater-style kitchens, new equipment, gracious service

IF YOU didn't know Vicvic Villavicencio, you would have missed him wearing in and out of the monotone crowd of his hugely popular Kamayan, Inuk and Suisuk buffet restaurants. But instead of piling goodies on a plate, Villavicencio, a jolly-bellow who arrives at his Cheerva, Makati branch together with four of his six children, will only check out the various food stations before settling down with nothing more than a glass of iced water.

Apparently, the man who "eats to live for a living," or he says it with a chuckle, must savor contentedly watching others enjoy the endless spread of dishes his always packed restaurants are famous for.

He's genuinely giving us one more reason to come back for more. Regulars of his eat-all-you-can establishments, which include the Japanese-Korean-smokehouse grill Sandokojin and the all-seafood buffet Something Fishy, will notice changes in the way their favorite foods are prepared and served. Static buffet lines have been replaced by theater-style kitchens, creating direct freshly cooked meals and more.

"First, the cooks have to keep their areas clean and prepared more carefully because people can see what they're doing," says Villavicencio.

"Then, it's easier for them to gauge how much food to prepare because they can see the crowd. Customers can also tell them directly if they want their food cooked in a certain way. And if a customer likes how a dish tastes, he can give the cooks instant feedback. So they can feed proud about what they do."

Meanwhile, chillers keep Inuk's best-selling sushi and sashimi at a consistent temperature, and special ovens slow-roast Dads' staples like turkey, lamb and roast beef to achieve their desired tenderness and juiciness.

JAPANESE chef Takada and Vicvic Villavicencio watch cooks prepare Suisui's teppanyaki and sashimi in a theater-style kitchen.

Product improvement

According to Villavicencio, such tweaking came about not so much because there was anything wrong with their food, "but to make the product better. In this business, like any business, the longer you run, the better you should become. If we stopped improving the concept, we'd end up with old concepts, right? Every so often [diners are getting smaller but better."

"It's the same with food," he continues. "Cooking is an art, but roasting a restaurant is a science. Creating a dish is difficult if you have to do it every day. I used to bid people that if they

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Vicvic Villavicencio elevates, once again, the bu

This premium griller makes me want to throw a fabulous barbecue party

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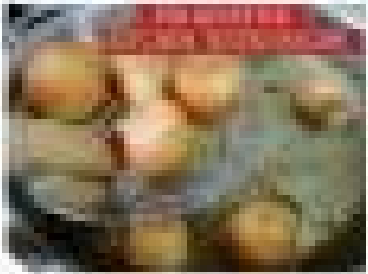
Fish balls—plus faith, courage,



ffect ...

virtue

From chicken-pork to lamb chops 'adobo'

From chicken-pork to lamb chops 'adobo'

By Kenjie Bago-Reyes

RENOWNED CHEF Jessie Sincioco gave up cooking and enjoying a very rich, thick, savory, mashed-flavored chicken and pork adobo prepared by aunt Estrellita Gacheco-Dy.

Jessie grew up under the loving care of Estrellita since she was nine years old. Estrellita is the younger sister of Jessie's father, Jesusito.

"It's a young age, I was already exposed to a very delicious adobo courtesy of my aunt," says Jessie, who openly admits that it was her aunt who diligently taught her how to bake and cook. "The thick, brown sauce is already a viand in itself. You'll crave for extra rice."

Estrellita's aversion is a result of her constant experimentation in the kitchen in order to come up with a distinct flavor for adobo, and not just the typical salty-sour kind. So, she adds chicken liver—and pork—into the mixture for that extra rich, lovely taste. She then marinates the chicken liver and thigh and pork belly with soy sauce, vinegar, bay leaf, garlic, peppercorns and oyster sauce (to give it a sweetish flavor).

She leaves the mixture overnight to make sure all the flavors seep in to the meat.

The next day, she separates all the meat from the sauce and grills the liver.

"That's the secret for that smoky flavor," says Estrellita. "You grill the liver and you either pound it or put in a food processor. The liver becomes your thickener."

"Aunt Ellen is very versatile," Estrellita adds. "My kids and husband (Edmundo) also like it with a lot of sauce." Estrellita has four daughters—Nightingale, Ineid, Abigail and Hosanna.

Versatile dish

Estrellita notes that the adobo with liver sauce actually tastes better after days of cooking and reheating. It's also a versatile dish since you can pair it with rice, pasta or simply roasted or baked potatoes.

Estrellita often pairs her adobo with fried fish and vegetables like guisang sergelyano.

Apart from adobo, Estrellita is also loved by her family and friends for her noodle dishes (lomi, pancit canton and bihon), stew-kare, Japanese tokwa't baboy and tempura.

Even in her 70s, Estrellita finds cooking and baking her therapy. Every time that she cooks only for her hubby and eldest daughter at home in Provident Village, Marikina, she cooks and bakes to keep her culinary juices flowing.

Estrellita has had several classes in the past. When she retired from her accounting job back in the '70s, she concentrated on her baking hobby. She attended various baking classes, such as Liberty Flour Mills, Fabros Bayross, etc. For several months, she learned to bake all sorts of cakes, which she also taught to Jessie.

Jessie's gourmet version

Jessie has also been known for her gourmet version of adobo. She can do shark, lamb, chicken and beef adobo, depending on her clients' preferences.

Right now, one of the bestsellers in her restaurant (Chef Jessie's Backyard Club) is the Lamb Chops Adobo.

"I have guests who come to the restaurant and look for something Filipino to taste," says Jessie. "So, our dish that's very Pinoy is adobo."

Lamb prepared adobo-style is quite irresistible. It's a good combination since the vinegar ideally tames the gamey taste and smell of the lamb.

"I usually marinate the lamb in the adobo sauce for at least 30 minutes and bake it in the oven to soften it, sear the meat, and char-broil grill it or the last minute before serving," Jessie says.

The lamb adobo has almost the same consistency as the dish adobo, which is equally popular in Jessie's restaurant. She marinates the dish breast with the skin on in the adobo sauce, and slowly roasts it.

"I like my adobo with lots of garlic," Jessie states. "And the lamb adobo goes deliciously well with grilled eggplant and tomato salad with arugula and lemon."

Chicken-Pork Adobo with Liver Sauce

(Estrellita Gacheco-Dy)

1 kg fresh chicken thighs cut into serving pieces

½ kg lean pork belly, cut into chunks

FROM C3

ADOBO CORNER

'The thick, brown liver sauce is already a viand in itself,' says chef Jessie Sincioco of her favorite childhood dish

FAMILY AFFAIR. Chef Jessie Sincioco with uncle Edmundo Dy and aunt Estrellita Gacheco-Dy

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2011 | PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER | D1

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Under the spell of 'Little Mermaid'

BACKSTORY

Lea Salonga

I BROUGHT friends out for a mommy-daughter date to the theater last Friday, the opening night of Atlantis Productions' rebranding of Disney's "The Little Mermaid" at the Meralco Theater.

All of us in the family have seen the Disney film on which the stage version was based. But we haven't seen the stage production, so I jumped at this opportunity.

From the moment the music played (under the excellent musical direction of Gerjay Javier), we were magically transported to the kingdom under the sea.

The plot is similar to that of the movie, besides moments that would have been impossible to stage (there is no shark character, nor is there a gigantic Ursula).

New songs by composer Alan Menken and lyricist Glenn Slater (the same team behind "Tangled and Sister Act: The Musical") were added, which seemed to blend seamlessly enough with the original tunes from the film.

This stage version stars Rachelle Ann Go as Ariel, Erik Santos as Prince Eric, Ricky Davao/Jonas as Ursula, DJ Mariano as Sebastian, Calvin Millado as King Triton, Rey Cascop as Scuttle, Bibi Rivera as Flotsam, Jamie Bautista as Jetsam and Raymond Concepcion as Grimsby.

Add to that a mix of Atlantis, Repertory Philippines and Trumpets/Stages regulars with a few fresh faces, and you have a very strong, principal player quality ensemble.

The way the show was orchestrated, I swear you heard far more than the number of players who were actually in the pit. The sound was rich, bright and full. Radha, too, be the sound design team. There was only one notable slip during the night, and even then it wasn't disturbing.

Inventive

The sets and costumes were beautiful and inventive. I loved the "Kiss the Girl" scene—where fireflies, rings and large birds came alive, creating a colorful and romantic atmosphere. "Under the Sea" was one big calypso party, with neon crustacean and sea plants. The silhouette puppetry deserved praise as well.

I couldn't ask for anything more from the performers. From the ensemble to principal, each one was completely committed to creating this beautiful world. But of course I have my standouts.

Liezel Lopez melted my world with her mind-blowing vocal skills as Ursula. Each time she opened her mouth to sing, I got in giggle at just how amazing she was, not to mention the bigness in her personality to actually make those humongous and sympathy confusions come to life. Ang sarap kayang hagisan ng saposo at sobrang galing.

MCGuido was more than sufficiently regal as the ruler of the seas; Bianca and Bandana were a lovely electric eel team (they were so close that even my 5-year-old knew what kind of creatures they were supposed to be); Cesca was a really funny and endearing Scuttle (her son also great in "The Birthday Musical," now showing on Studio 23 and ASAP); and Concepcion was a very dignified Grimsby.

Mariano was fantastic as Sebastian, although his Caribbean accent fronted a world as confused and localized since the Melvin Sabio to the six princesses, too, each for being as unique whether they were on land, or in the ocean. To the main ensemble, you were all crazy-marks.

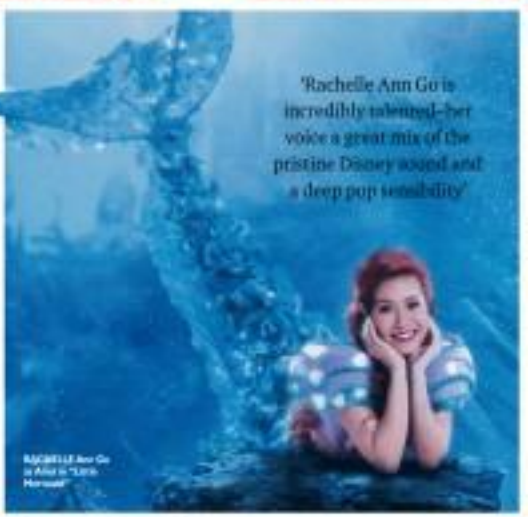
Improved diction

Now, for the two actors making their musical theater debuts. Jaanna has easily improved in her English diction. It is remarkable for "Mermaid," be put in a lot of hard work, which was beautifully on display here, especially when he sang. There is still room for improvement, but he has made great strides in the right direction. And yes, he is very cute, too!

As for Go, I don't know that the superlatives in my vocabulary could cover just how wonderful I thought she was. Bundles of charm oozed from her, as well as an easy sense of humor and adventure. Her voice was also a great mix of the pristine Disney sound and a deep pop sensibility that made this actor (and her Ariel) accessible to everyone.

She was a perfect Ariel, and her portrayal will only continue to deepen and improve. She blew me away on opening night. Whatever management and the studio or record label is exposing Rachelle Ann Go needs to realize, if they haven't already, just how big a treasure they have on their hands. Go is incredibly talented.

So run, drive, and yes, swim to "The Little Mermaid." They have three more weekends at the Meralco Theater. If the standing ovation on opening night is any indication, they are in for a treat. Congratulations to the entire cast and crew, including realizers Bobby Garcia and Chari Arupo-ordinaga and choreographer Cecile Afuriano. Break-fine until Dec. 11!



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Life-changing marathon run

"MARATHON Boy," an inspiring, reality-based story that chronicles the race-to-life trials of an underprivileged Indian boy, premieres Nov. 26 at 9 p.m. on Hero.

Sold by his mother to a street hawker at age 5, Shahkar Singh was determined to overcome surviving as a beggar until he was rescued by Himanshi, a judo coach who runs an orphanage for slum children.

Singh, under the guidance of Himanshi, transforms into an Indian's greatest runner, finishing a record-breaking 65K run in the age of 6 and eventually being hailed as the hero of the impoverished masses.

But amid rising Asian crime controversies, smuggler and political scandals brought about by greed and corruption that led to the pair's near dismissal.

"Marathon Boy" is a brutal glimpse at the darker side of humanity but also a touching portrait of the remarkable relationship between parent and child.

Mind mysteries

World-renowned mentalist Keith Barry delves into the memories of the mind, revealing how ordinary people can better harness their own abilities in Discovery Channel's new series "Deception With Keith Barry."

From reinventing a person's thoughts through the murder of electric shock to hypnotizing a mass into believing he is a beggar, Barry demonstrates his extraordinary powers while imparting some of the secrets behind his skills in viewers.

The series airs Wednesdays at 9 p.m. starting Dec. 7, with reruns on Thursdays at 12 a.m., 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. and Saturdays at 6 p.m.

Elizabeth Oropesa makes strong comeback as 'lola' in TV drama

VIEWFINDER

Analyn U. Jovero

Many other performers could learn from her

ELIZABETH Oropesa

MANY years ago, we read a movie script about teen pregnancy and urged producers to film it, because it effectively and accurately dramatized a social problem that is affecting an increasing number of young Filipinos. That script remains unproduced, but the good news is that a new TV series, "Kambal, Karibal," is presenting its own take on the issue.

Perseverance

Starring Ai Ai de las Alas in the title role, the afternoon primetime series started informing last May 16 and boldly underlined the context and seriousness of its controversy tale about parental responsibilities being imposed on youths not immature to readily measure up to them without having to grow up practically overnight.

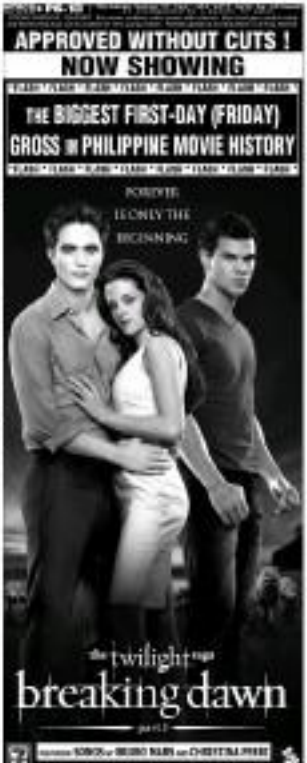
In the new drama series, Angelita has a huge crush on Basilio (Charee Pineda), but she doesn't seem up to his advances because she thinks he's a bad influence on her brother. Actually, that's the least of Angelita's problems. Besides her family concerns, because they're confronted with all sorts of more elemental problems, from enough, of course, to pressure-cook anybody's sensibilities, Angelita's disquiet further stems from the fact that her family's financial difficulties have become so dire that she's forced to consider that Ginger (as is still around—is talented as an actress—and should be lured out of self-imposed retirement. Well, she's back in "Kapatiran," and very strong showing in the new series indicates that she should be back to stay.

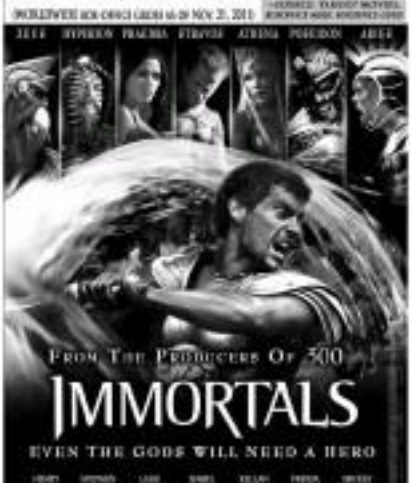
As role in Angelita and his younger sister, Gregorio's character has to be both loving and strong because their mother is dead and their father has "disappeared." The eventual action sequences both love and strength, as her character emerges, as the story's early lukewarm, before the young leads are barred in line up in their new responsibilities as teen parents.

Exceptional

What makes Oropesa's performance so exceptional is her ability to personify strength without coming across as nasty and "calculating" antidote. Other actresses could have played her character for "strength" on the one hand, or occasionally and unkindly extravagant on the other.

But Oropesa avoids either pitfall by focusing only on the reality of the predicaments and problems she has to contend with, with no melodramatic "theatrical" all's directness, honesty and lack of "emotional blackmail."





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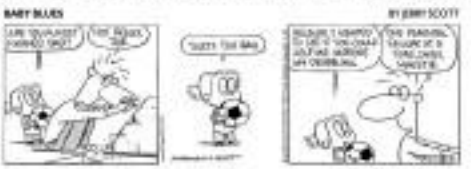

RIKO MACHINE — BY HANNA ABRERA

SEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

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SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK — BY MARA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

TODAY'S FORTUNE Surprisingly enough, some unexpected comments about your personality will be made by your closest friends. You're a quick-witted and humorous person, and you'll shine in every social situation. You're a natural, and you work well with people. In the coming year, you will build on previous successes and be an outstanding success.

Birthdate of: Billy Connolly, actor/comedian; Xavier Cugat, musician; Jeff Daniels, actor; Thomas Merchant, comedian/writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Because your appreciation for beauty is so heightened, give yourself a chance to enjoy it. Visit museums, art galleries, libraries, theaters, or botanical buildings. Listen and soothe nature.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Don't let your sensitivity to others make it impossible for you to make decisions. If possible, you will avoid any conflicting issues with someone to help a loved one's. Romance will be very much in evidence.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Whatever with friends and associates will be warm and friendly today. It's easy to establish a mutually beneficial situation with others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Even you can help someone at work today, you will. It's time for you to socialize with others and imagine what it's like to walk a mile in their shoes.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) You feel unusually sociable and with children today. You often will enjoy the arts or entertaining your friends. Whatever you do, if you get a chance, it's a great day for love and romance!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Family matters are stressed and you're very sensitive today. You're also a good day for that something beautiful for someone you love or for a family member. You'll enjoy collecting your loved ones.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You're in a wonderful day for matters involving old friends and people who need to use their imagination. Be your compassionate self and you will be pleased and comfortable.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You're in a wonderful day for both love and excitement. Look for ways to boost your energy. Many of you will buy something beautiful that pleases you or a loved one.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You're in a day to be learning, diplomatic and dressing to others today. It's in the best interest to be helpful to your advantage – make arrangements or consult a friend.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Dedicate to beautiful surroundings will please you today. Try to get outdoors if you're in 30 minutes and be yourself, or just over and together two parts, you say.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Friendships are warm and pleasing today. In fact, you might be surprised to discover how much love there is around you. You are now that others think you're.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Romance will encourage others, either or more established might begin today. There's difficult problem in the afternoon or from worship involved.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answer: Surprising people

4	1	9	5	6	8	3	2	7
3	6	2	9	7	1	5	4	8
8	5	7	4	3	2	9	1	6
6	4	8	1	5	9	7	3	2
9	2	3	7	8	6	4	5	1
7	5	1	3	2	4	6	8	9
2	3	6	8	4	7	1	9	5
1	8	4	6	9	5	2	7	3
5	9	7	2	1	3	8	6	4

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

9			5		8			7
		8	7		4	6		
7	5						8	9
	1						4	
4	3						2	1
		5	3		6	4		
1			2		7			3

Difficulty Level ★★★

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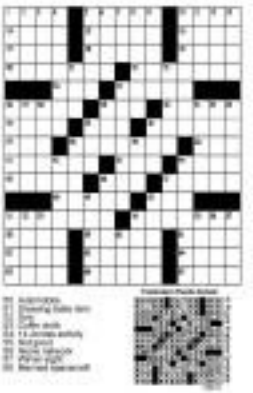

Answer: Popular Sports

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